Winter 1979
Volume 24 no 1 (106)
£3.25 $6.50

SURVEY

a journal of East & West studies

Eastern Europe: Lessons of History

George R. Urban Peter Deli

Antonin Liehm

Comintern—60 Years After

Walter Kendall Bertram D. Wolfe

China

Susan L. Shirk Peter R. Moody

Solzhenitsyn

Alain Besançon

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Editor: Leopold Labedz

International Advisory Board

Enzo Bettiza ..... *Il Giornale, Milan*
François Bourricaud ..... *University of Paris*
Alan Bullock ..... *University of Oxford*
Luciano Cafagna ..... *University of Pisa*
Maurice Cranston ..... *European University Institute, Florence*
Melvin Croan ..... *University of Wisconsin*
Colin Crouch ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
François Duchêne ..... *University of Sussex*
Giorgio Galli ..... *Critica Sociale, Milan*
Pierre Hassner ..... *Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, Paris*
Masamichi Inoki ..... *Kyoto University*
James Joll ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
Karl Kaiser ..... *University of Cologne*
Ivo Lederer ..... *New York*
John Wilson Lewis ..... *Stanford University*
Richard Löwenthal ..... *Free University of Berlin*
Alasdair MacIntyre ..... *Boston University*
Donald MacRae ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
Mark Mancall ..... *Stanford University*
Ali Mazrui ..... *University of Michigan*
Ian Nish ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
Leonard Schapiro ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
Soedjatmoko ..... *Djakarta, Indonesia*
Theo Sommer ..... *Die Zeit, Hamburg*
Leonard Sussman ..... *Freedom House, New York*

Editorial Assistants

Susan MacRae Elizabeth Winter

Editorial Office

Ilford House, 133 Oxford Street, London W1R 1TD (Tel. 01-734 0592)

Subscription Office

Oxford University Press, Subscription Department, Press Road, Neasden, London NW10 0DD (Tel. 01-450 8080)

Subscription Rates

UK £12 or US $24.00. Elsewhere £13. Single copies £3.25 or US $6.50.
Vol. 25: UK £12; US $27; Elsewhere £15. Single copies £3.75 or US $7.25.
Special arrangements for airmail.

Manuscripts

Articles should be submitted in duplicate to the editorial office. They should be typed in double-spacing and, preferably, conform to the house style of *Survey*.

Copyright © *Survey* 1979 ISSN 0039-6192

Survey is published under the auspices of the London School of Economics & Political Science by

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Produced in cooperation with Freedom House (New York)

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Winter 1979
Volume 24
no 1 (106)

SURVEY

a journal of East & West studies

Eastern Europe: Lessons of History

"Eurocommunism" and the Prague Spring ... *George R. Urban & Antonin Liehm* 1
Jean-Paul Sartre and Hungary 1956 ... ... *Peter Deli* 32

Military Affairs

Two Eyes for a Tooth: The State of Soviet Strategic Doctrine ... ... *Peter King* 45
The Soviet and Chinese Armies: their Post-Civil War Roles ... ... *Jonathan R. Adelman* 57

China

"Going Against the Tide": Political Dissent in China ... ... *Susan L. Shirk* 82
Law and Heaven: The Evolution of Chinese Totalitarianism ... ... *Peter R. Moody* 116

Solzhenitsyn

Solzhenitsyn at Harvard ... ... *Alain Besançon* 133

Comintern—60 Years After Its Foundation

Reflections on the Anniversary ... ... *Walter Kendall* 145
The Sixth Congress and the American CP ... *Bertram D. Wolfe* 157

Trotsky—100 Years After His Birth

Trotsky's Trotskyism ... ... *Robert H. McNeal* 174
Ambiguities of Trotsky's Leninism ... ...*Anthony D'Agostino* 178
Lenin, Trotsky and Parvus ... ... *David S. Anin* 204

Letter to the Editor ... ... *Yuri Luryi* 213

Obituary: Max Hayward ... ... *Victor Erlich* 216

Our Contributors 218

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

FALL/WINTER 1978 VOLUME 32, No.2

LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION IN COMMUNIST STATES

CHINA

"Modernization and Succession" — **Kenneth Lieberthal**
"Change and Economic Policy" — **Chu-yuan Cheng**
"Succession and Foreign Policy" — **Jonathan D. Pollack**

YUGOSLAVIA

"Stability and Succession" — **Bogdan Denitch**

THE SOVIET UNION

"The Problems of Succession" — **Myron Rush**
"Change of Elite Generations" — **Seweryn Bialer**
"The Economic Problems" — **Alec Nove**
"An International Dimension" — **Dmitri Simes**

SPRING/SUMMER 1979 VOLUME 33, No. 1

TECHNOLOGY AND THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Featuring Articles by:

SANJAYA LALL **HENRY NAU**
DENIS GOULET **WARD MOREHOUSE**

Subscriptions: Single current issue $3.50; single back issue $3.50; one year $7.00; two years $13.00; three years $19.00; outside U.S. and Canada, add .75 cents per issue for postage and handling.

School of International Affairs
Columbia University, Box#4
420 West 118th Street,
New York, New York 10027

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Conversation with Antonin Liehm

"Eurocommunism" and the Prague Spring

George R. Urban

The Invader you Know

Urban—My theme is the impact of the Czechoslovak reform movement on what has come to be known as "Eurocommunism." Throughout the Prague Spring, and already during the last two years of Novotny's leadership, the West European Communist parties took a keen interest in Czechoslovakia's cautious attempt to reform its institutions, and some of them, especially the Italian and Spanish Parties, followed it with undisguised sympathy.

I am curious to know what accounted for this interest and sympathy seeing that there was, on the face of it, little in common between the conditions in which the Czechoslovak Party found itself in 1968—Soviet control, Stalinist leadership, command economy, constraints of the Warsaw Pact—and those in which the West European Communist parties were able to operate.

Liehm—The West European parties had their sympathies well prepared for the Prague events by one all-important element which they shared, and had shared for many years before 1968, with all the world's Communist parties: Russian control and Russification. To grasp the full measure of this control, and the anger with which, openly or covertly, the West European Communist parties reacted to it, one has to look at some of the details. The Stalinization of the world's Communist parties in the 1930s was not merely a matter of foisting on them the despotic device of "democratic centralism" and of forcing them to follow Soviet directives on every imaginable issue, but also a matter of imposing on them typically Russian policies and experiences. For example, every West European Communist party had a Soviet type of internal police force built into its organization (and there was no attempt to hide its existence) which kept an eye on members' activities and enforced discipline. All this created enormous resentment.

Some of the West European CPs were willing enough to install their *own* brand of Stalinism (the post of dictator has never gone begging) but what they found very hard to stomach was the mindless imposition of an alien and wholly unsuitable model. Soviet control and Russification were, then, one fertile source of restiveness.

* This article orginated in a programme broadcast by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Inc., and will be incorporated in *Communist Reformation* shortly to be published by Maurice Temple Smith, London.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Another was the democratic, and essentially Social Democratic, milieu in which the West European working class had been nurtured, and which took for granted certain elementary liberties: freedom of opinion, freedom of speech, democratic elections, and the like. All this ran diametrically counter to everything the Leninist/Stalinist parties stood for. The Communists, therefore, found themselves in an environment which treated them with great mistrust and in which they found it difficult to make any decisive headway, no matter how well some of them might have done at individual elections.

Ironically, they fared best when democracy was suspended and they had to fear no competition or contamination from the non-Communist sections of West European society. For example, the French Communist Party had its heyday under Nazi occupation because the rigours of war provided it with an environment in which the Party's own dictatorial and conspiratorial methods fell into place rather naturally—gone was the need to apologize for "democratic centralism" which was now merely matching like with like; gone was the danger of infection as democratic political life had ceased to exist; and there could be, under occupation, no dissensions within the Party. Nazism provided the natural setting for the monstrous logic of the Stalinist type of communism to come into its own.

For the *leaders* of the West European parties fidelity to Stalinism was a matter of self-preservation; Khrushchev's report to the 20th Party Congress, therefore, came as a profound shock to them. Thorez, for example—as we now know—bitterly complained that "first, the Soviet Party forced a line on us which no Party dared to transgress, and gave us a version of Party history which no Party dared to disbelieve. Now, without any warning, Khrushchev has given the lie to everything we have been enjoined to consider as true and infallible and have demanded of others to consider as true and infallible"—or words to that effect.

Now, the Party rank and file thought otherwise. They were hoping that Khrushchev's revelations were the first steps towards a democratic renewal of Soviet society. This, as we know, did not happen. On the contrary, the 1956 Hungarian revolution was brutally put down on the pretext that it was a counter-revolutionary uprising organized and financed by Western interests. Such was the speed of events in the autumn of 1956—with Suez coinciding with Hungary—and so cleverly was the character of the Hungarian events manipulated by Soviet propaganda, that the Soviet story was (despite ructions among intellectuals) eventually accepted by the French Communist Party and, with some doubts and hesitations, by the Italian Party too.

Urban—It has never been clear to me why the Italians fell in with the brazen untruths put about by Moscow. I should have thought that even a cursory examination of Imre Nagy's programme would have revealed a marked affinity with what was stirring, and was indeed very soon to take shape, in Togliatti's mind.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Liehm—This is a legitimate observation—*ex post facto*. At the time, however, Stalinist discipline and the myth of Soviet infallibility were still too strong in the Italian Party to permit an open defiance of Moscow. By 1968, however, the Italian Communists had gone far enough on the road to polycentrism and independence to be able to repudiate the Soviet contention that the Prague events too were potentially at least a counter-revolution. The years between 1956 and 1968 were momentous for the history of the communist movement because they saw the collapse of the central authority of Moscow and a proliferation of parties with grudging, or weak, or no loyalty at all to the Soviet Union. The Italians, on their part, decided to play the parliamentary game; their rejection of the Soviet account of what had taken place in Prague was a matter of both intellectual integrity and electoral prudence.

Urban—At the risk of making a slight (though I believe relevant) detour, it might be profitable to widen our search for the roots of Eurocommunism by looking into the relationship between the Prague Spring and the Hungarian Revolution.

I recall an extremely courageous commemoration of the trial and execution of Imre Nagy and his associates in the 13 June 1968 issue of *Literarni Listy* of which you were the political editor. Written by O. Machatka, this was an overt condemnation of both the Stalinist system to which Nagy had reacted, and of the reasons offered by Khrushchev and the other 1956 Soviet leaders for the suppression of the Hungarians. It was crystal clear from Machatka's whole argument that in praising Imre Nagy's reforms at the time of his first (1953–5) premiership and his intended reforms at the time of the second, Machatka was making a case for the legitimacy of the Prague Spring:

> Nagy . . . wanted to return parliament to its true role, and to turn the government into a full-blooded instrument for the management of the affairs of the state. The intelligentsia and the peasants were to be rehabilitated socially, while there was to be legal rehabilitation for the victims of tyranny. . . . Through his criticism of totalitarian dictatorship and through his humanistic concept of socialism, Nagy became a prominent exponent of the democratic and national principle of socialism. He based his thinking on recognition of the fact that a totalitarian regime, the mechanical copying of foreign examples and servility were indivisible. He wrote that the people's democracies had lost their popular and democratic character due to their copying of Soviet experiences. He therefore related the return of democracy to respect for national peculiarities and to the idea of specific paths to socialism. He considered a country's sovereignty and independence to be an indispensable condition for the preservation of these national peculiarities . . .

and so on.

Liehm—It will strike you as strange—and in retrospect it strikes

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

me as *inexplicable*—that we Czech reform Communists had not properly studied the 1956 Hungarian revolution. We tended to shove its lessons out of our minds as though the revolution had never happened; and those who *were* familiar with it did not think it could have any bearing on what we were trying to do. It was only in the Summer of 1968 that the relevance of the Hungarian story became increasingly clear to us.

Urban—This does not quite accord with what Ota Sik has told me. Sik's contention was that he and his colleagues in his Institute of Economic Research had realized clearly enough that the Hungarian precedent was revelant—ominously relevant—but whereas they thought that the Hungarians had failed because they had tried to reform the system by frontal attack, they, the Czech reform Communists, would smuggle it in step by step through economic reform. In the event, however, the Russians found the *sotto voce* Czech approach—which turned out to be not so *sotto voce* after all—just as unacceptable as they had found the Hungarian uprising.

Liehm—Sik and his staff may have been aware of the dangers of an open confrontation, but I very much doubt that they had analysed Nagy's programme any more than we had—more of which later.

One day Machatka came to my office with a suggestion that we ought to devote a short article to the 10th anniversary of the execution of Imre Nagy and acknowledge some of our debt to the Hungarian precedent. Now Machatka was a very minor figure—a scholarly reviewer of books with a job in one of our institutes—and no great fighter. It seemed to me at the time that the article he was suggesting would be at most an interesting footnote to the reform movement, so I encouraged him to write it.

I did not realize, nor did anyone else—and this shows the extent of our naïvety—that a review of the kind Machatka had in mind would prove to be not at all a footnote but very much part of the main text! Well, Machatka's article turned out to be no different from a great many other articles we published in those days. We did not want to make a great splash of it so we published it in a subordinate position in the international section of the paper and not as a political article.

Urban—You didn't think the Russians would prick up their ears and say: "Aha, the Prague reformers are justifying the Hungarian counter-revolution and are therefore well on the way to counter-revolution themselves?"

Liehm—Not only did we *not* feel that, but we didn't feel another thing either—a blunder of great proportions for which I feel responsible to this day (I don't think it would have changed history if we had not made it, but one should nevertheless avoid making mistakes of this kind): Machatka's article was published on the day of Dubcek's arrival in Budapest on an official visit. We of course did not know that Dubcek was going to Hungary—these things were always kept

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

secret—but, to be frank with you, we *could* have found out if we had really wanted to. The fact is that none of us thought there was anything to worry about.

Well, as Dubcek got off the plane—there was Kadar waiting for him with Machatka's piece in his pocket. Dubcek, when he was shown it, was greatly embarrassed because he knew nothing about the article. It was certainly not our intention either to make difficulties for Dubcek or to alienate Kadar—Kadar was, after all, the only leader in the Warsaw Pact who behaved more or less decently *vis-à-vis* the Prague Spring. But there it all was: the Western press, and the Russians too, began to engage in wild speculations—the Prague reform Communists, they said, were clearly Imre Nagy's followers and the Machatka article was deliberately published on the morning of Dubcek's visit to Hungary. Conclusion: there was collusion between Dubcek and the Hungarians.

Urban—Did the Russians think that Kadar had suddenly reverted to his pro-Nagy policies of October 1956 and embraced, after the Dresden meeting at that, the programme of the Prague reformers?

Liehm—I am not saying they did. It is my speculation that at the back of their minds they might have entertained that kind of a suspicion as they were, and are, suspicious of everyone in Eastern Europe. What I do know is that Kadar was very angry and rightly so because he had, of course, nothing to do with any of this any more than Dubcek.

In the meantime a great myth was being built up around the Machatka article. People who never bothered to read 90 per cent of what had been published in Prague that spring and summer nevertheless know all about the Czechs' alleged Hungarian connection. Poor Machatka was the last to expect that his review would become so memorable an occasion, and I still think it would have had no repercussions had it not come out on the day it did.

Urban—Whatever the timing, Machatka and your paper were unambiguously rehabilitating Imre Nagy and, in fact, justifying the Hungarian revolution. When I first read Machatka's article I knew nothing about Dubcek's visit to Kadar, but it was clear enough that Machatka was treading on dangerous ground. Katyn, the Warsaw Uprising, Hungary in 1956 and the Prague Spring—these are skeletons in the Soviet cupboard.

Liehm—*Of course* Machatka's article did amount to Nagy's rehabilitation; *of course* the parallel with 1968 was unmistakable—but remember that in 1968 revelations about the Soviet show trials and our own were printed daily in our press; we ran Deutscher's *Unfinished Revolution* in instalments over a long period and carried a great many other items which one might have thought were at least as damaging to Soviet *amour propre* as was Machatka's article on Nagy. I still believe the

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

article would have melted into the landscape if Dubcek's visit to Hungary had not drawn special attention to it.

Urban—Why do you say that for some years after 1956 the Hungarian experience was not thought to be relevant to your programme? Is it possible that even Communists of your own inclinations actually believed that 1956 had been a counter-revolution?

Liehm—No, I would not say that was exactly what we believed. We were, right from the beginning, very sympathetic to the Hungarians. At the same time we thought that Hungary was still a predominantly agricultural country with one big city planted in the middle of the vast Hungarian plains, a country which had not shed its 19th century traditions, a country of horses and hunting and all the other paraphernalia of gentry life. And we consequently believed that when, at a certain point in October 1956, the Hungarian authorities lost control, Hungary's old reflexes, its hidden violence and intransigent nationalism, were reasserting themselves. So while we were not thinking of 1956 explicitly as a counter-revolution, we did not believe that we could learn from it. We thought that the democratic traditions and cultural history of the Czech lands demanded a response which would be different from what we had seen in Hungary. In other words, we believed that we could control our liberalization and render it acceptable to Moscow.

It was only after the Machatka uproar, and eventually after the Soviet occupation, that we began to look at the Hungarian revolution more closely and discovered how fatefully similar the two events really were if one took a large enough view of them. Of course, each country had its peculiarities, its political personality and so on, but the basic similiarities were overwhelming. It took us some time to say this openly. I started saying it to my Communist friends soon after my arrival in the West in 1969—and for some time many of them would not accept it. Until 1973/74 even a man like Garaudy would not admit it, and it is a sobering thought that the Italian and French CPs still refuse to concede that Hungary and Czechoslovakia were analogous revolutions, even though many Italian and some French Communist leaders privately recognize the connection.

Urban—The question one would want to answer is: do nations, societies, parties learn from one another's experiences, and, indeed, from their own? There is very little in history to encourage us to think that they do.

Liehm—A Czechoslovak film director, Jan Kadur (now in New York), told me the following story. "I happened to be in Budapest with a delegation during the first stages of the Hungarian uprising, and I told my Hungarian friends—'Boys, you are playing a dangerous game; the Russians will not let it come off'. The Hungarians, all of them Communists whom I had known for years, laughed in disbelief. They were certain that their programme was not only unimpeachable from

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Soviet point of view but constructive, and that the Russians would perceive it in the same light. Looking at Hungary from Prague, one could see where Hungary's train was heading, but the Hungarian Communists would not share that perspective."

"At the 1968 Karlovy Vary film festival the roles became reversed: now it was my Hungarian colleagues' turn to warn us that the Prague Spring was going to be squashed and ours to express disbelief. And we did, as I well remember, argue against the Hungarians' dire warnings. We told them that Czechoslovakia was not Hungary, that our reforms were moderate and peaceful, and the Russians would understand and indeed welcome them, and so on. Well, the Hungarians had a great piece of wisdom on their side. They said: 'Perfectly true—Czechs are not Hungarians, but Russians are Russians! ' And they were."

"We are not Hungarians," or French or Italians—this is the mistake all nations make. Americans will tell you they are not Germans, the British that they are not French—words and excuses to cover up a basic flaw in man's collective psyche: his inability to recognize himself in his neighbour.

Urban—But how could the sacred cow of national identity (not to say nationalism) be kept alive if an Englishman admitted that he had anything to learn from anyone as outlandish as an Italian? National prejudice is about the only heart-warming feeling left to us in this disenchanted and egalitarian age. Would you want to deprive us of that?

Liehm—Alas, I have to agree with your conclusion, but not for the reasons you mention—tongue in cheek I suppose. After the suppression of Czechoslovakia on 21 August 1968, everyone was asking us: how could you have been so blind as not to see that the Russians would clamp down on your form of socialism? My answer has always been that nations are like human beings: they only react to their *own* experiences. A child will not believe that the oven is hot until he has accidently put his hand on it—but then he reacts to the oven with intense caution again and again irrespective of whether the oven is in fact hot or hot no longer. Nations react in the same way. The French, for example, are still highly suspicious of the English because English aggression and occupation have happened to them repeatedly in their history. They have great difficulty in believing that they could not happen again.

Urban—But in the case of Czechoslovakia it wasn't that you had no precedent in your own, and very recent, experience. You cannot say that the occupation of 1938 happened to another country.

Liehm—Ah, but nations don't think in terms of "occupations"—they think in terms of their experiences of *other* nations. Occupation by Nazi Germany was one thing—but it never occurred to anyone that this should move us to think of Soviet occupation as an analogous possibility.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the 1960s Polish Communists used to visit us and spend long periods of time with us in Prague. They saw the euphoria of the reform movement but their scepticism was intense. Poland was at the time going through the worst of the Gomulka period, and our Polish comrades were highly conscious that the dead hand of Gomulka of the 1960s was the hand of the same man who had raised Polish hopes in 1956 by defying the Russians. "Look at the state of Gomulka-Poland today," they warned us: "*We* are your future!"

Well, we didn't of course believe them: "This is not Poland; things work differently here." They would shake their heads at us: "There is one link missing in the Czech historical experience—Russian occupation."

And these Poles were right. The last "Russian" occupation of the Czech and Slovak lands happened in the 12th century, at the time of the Tatar invasion (leaving out of account the Russian presence on our soil during the Napoleonic wars when the Russians were not enemies). We were simply not in the habit of thinking of the Russians as invaders—our historical experience was totally different from that of the Poles and Hungarians whose image of the Russian steamroller was deeply engraved in the national psyche.

Who was Responsible for 21 August 1968?

Urban—Shouldn't you have been warned, though, by the political implications of the behaviour of those Soviet troops which occupied Subcarpathian Ruthenia, Slovakia and ultimately much of the Czech lands as allies and "liberators" in 1944 and 1945? In Ruthenia, for example, one of the first acts of the Soviet authorities was to dissolve the Czechoslovak National Committees and put up Committees of their own which then "voted" for the incorporation of Ruthenia in the Soviet Union—despite Benes's agreement with Stalin that the pre-Munich borders of Czechoslovakia would be respected. Such were the speed and the extent of Sovietization that the Czechoslovak delegate and his staff were put under house arrest and not permitted, under pain of death, to communicate with the London government except through Red Army channels—which meant the Kremlin and Fierlinger. A message secretly sent by a member of the Czechoslovak delegation to the government in London (28 November 1944) tells its own story:

> The Czechoslovak government's authority cannot be exercised. Where is the Treaty? Czechoslovak property is being stolen in front of our eyes. The Red Army carries even the telephone wires away. Nobody seems to have the courage to oppose them. The NKVD is here and operates. The people see it and cannot feel respect for the Czechoslovak Administrative Delegation. The people are puzzled. The officers of the political service of the Ukrainian Front Command direct the propaganda of the Communist Party. The destiny of the Delegation is in your hands. If you do not intervene in Moscow, we cannot master the situa-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> tion. It is forbidden to communicate with you. I am calling in secret. Your answer must be worded cautiously. Signed: Krucky.

And a day later:

> The risk of calling directly is mounting. I am perhaps calling you for the last time. We are under pressure. Only your *démarche* in Moscow can save us. Whoever refuses to volunteer for the Red Army is in danger and has to take refuge in the mountains. Many do. The same happens to those who refuse to vote Communist when local or district Committees are being formed. The terror is directed by the political service of the Red Army. Try to send a courier plane and bring me to London. You should know everything. Signed: Krucky.

Liehm—I don't dispute your evidence. The Soviet forces behaved just as badly in Ruthenia and Slovakia as they did in Hungary and Germany, trying to muscle in on the political scene, looting, raping and so on. But by the summer of 1945 they had left Czechoslovakia and the impact of the excesses you have cited remained limited to those who had been personally affected. The kind of occupation *we* had was vastly different from the Russian occupation of Poland, for example, which lasted for centuries and involved Russification as a long-range imperial policy.

In other words—I am not disputing the facts of Soviet behaviour in Czechoslovakia in 1944 and 1945; what I am disputing is the impact it had on the mentality of the people of our country. Who in Prague thought that whatever the Russians may have done in Ruthenia in 1944 ought to be a factor in their assessment of how the Russians might behave in 1968? None of this was being given serious consideration.

The Hungarians knew that if once they lifted the banner of national resistance, as they had done in 1848, it was the Russian army that would be sent in to crush it. But in Czech history nothing of the kind had happened, and it was very hard to believe that it would happen in 1968. *Now* the gap has been closed, and you can be sure that the Czechs in their relationship with Russia will never again be caught on the wrong foot.

Urban—Are you saying that between 1945 and 1948 Czechoslovakia was fully sovereign because it had, after the summer of 1945, no Russian troops on its territory?

Liehm—I am talking of popular perceptions: as there were no occupation forces in our country, it was easy to believe that we were not "occupied"—that we were masters of our destiny, which in fact we were not.

Urban—You have said that the Czechoslovak experience of 1938 was not relevant—or that it was, at any rate, not incorporated in your calculations in 1968 because Russians were not Germans. But surely that extremely bright and knowledgeable section of the Czechoslovak

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

intelligentsia which led the 1968 reform movement—your own group and others—must have realized that the geopolitical position of Czechoslovakia was in Moscow's assessment very similar to what it had been in the eyes of Hitler in 1938?

Liehm—That is the way one would see the Prague Spring from the outside and after the event, and I grant you that from the strategic and geopolitical points of view your analogy is valid, *sub specie aeternitatis*. But for those of us who were deeply involved in the day-to-day conduct of the reform movement, the parallel was less easy to recognize. Let me give you chapter and verse of my *own* shortsightedness.

When I first arrived in America in 1970 a small party was organized for me by various friends and acquaintances. Among them there was a man who recognized me from a television interview: "Didn't I see you on American television the day before the occupation of Czechoslovakia? And didn't you say in that programme that there would be *no* Soviet intervention?" "Yes," I answered, "you did, and I was dead wrong."

What in fact happened was this: in the afternoon of 20 August 1968 a CBS correspondent came to interview me in my office. The brunt of his questioning was: did I think the Soviets would move in on us? My reply was that any such supposition was totally nonsensical and I gave him my reasons for thinking why it could not happen and would not happen. Well, it happened within 12 hours of my statement, and I have gone on record with my imbecility and lack of foresight!

My only excuse is that I was not alone in thinking as I did, for it was not only Dubcek and his naive Politburo and a bunch of hopeful intellectuals who thought that the Russians would not crush the reform movement, but the country as a whole thought likewise. There were fears—yes—but our irrational hope that the Russians would leave us alone was rationalized in various ways, until everyone talked himself into believing that they would leave us alone for sound practical reasons. And why did this irrational hope gain such wide currency? Because there was in the Czech national experience no historical precedent for a Russian invasion.

Urban—To what extent did you rationalize your hopes as a Communist?

Liehm—Although year after year our illusions about the Soviet Union had been gradually eroded, we still tended to say: "What would the Russians gain by occupation? We are not threatening their security; we do not want to become their enemies; they would completely tarnish their image if they crushed us and do irreparable damage to the Western Communist parties." Yes, we rationalized our hopes, and in my CBS interview I, too, rationalized my illusions. The trouble was that my rationalization didn't work!

Your question implies: all right—you believed what you did because you had, as a Communist, certain residual hopes about the Soviet

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Union. I accept that—but why then did the whole of Czechoslovakia also think as we did? Because *no one* believed in a Russian invasion!

Urban—Was the Czechoslovak press free enough in the spring and summer of 1968 to touch on the sensitive issue of a possible occupation? We know that the Czech and Slovak press, radio and television were extremely outspoken, but my recollection is that the threat of a Soviet invasion was perhaps the only topic they avoided talking about.

Liehm—Broadly speaking—yes, but since when are nations aware only of things they can read about in the newspapers? I must come back to my earlier conclusion: the Czechs did not believe that the Soviet Union would invade them because there was no emergency warning system built into their national psychology to alert them to this particular danger.

Urban—Did some of you in the neo-Communist intellectual vanguard argue that the Russians must by now realize that the Soviet model was inapplicable in advanced West European countries and that the Soviet leaders would therefore sanction the Czechoslovak experiment? The argument would have been a strong one in its own right, and it might also have served as a cogent rationalization of your hope that the Russians would let you get away with your reforms in the universal interests of "socialism."

Liehm—Yes, we did. Wishful thinking is always an important element in political motivation and it was certainly part of ours. We based our hopes on two factors. First, we believed that Khrushchev's move to de-Stalinize the Soviet Union was a considered act of long-term policy, and although Khrushchev was eventually removed from power, we were convinced that the clock could not be turned back. We argued, therefore, that the Czech experiment would be consonant with the general thrust of Soviet thinking, for it would offer positive proof that the system *could* be reformed quietly, without bloodshed, and without causing tremors in the Soviet-East European community.

Secondly, in 1966, 1967 and 1968 we believed that the whole of Soviet policy was very much in the melting pot, and we thought we had reason to hope that the more enlightened men in the Soviet leadership had a good chance of overcoming the conservative elements. The invasion of Czechoslovakia proved us wrong, but this could not be predicted. Today, most students of Soviet affairs agree that the transition from Khrushchev to Brezhnev ended in August 1968; but between 1964 and 1968 the Kremlin's counsels were flexible—by Soviet standards anyway.

On the basis of these two assumptions we were persuaded that the Prague Spring would be tolerated. Dubcek expressed this belief in almost religious terms—the intellectuals in more rational and often cynical language, but everybody shared the view that sooner or later the Russians would put up with our experiment because they would

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

come to understand that we were also acting in their own long-term interests, or, to put it at its lowest, not against their interests.

Urban—Were you, in fact, saying: the Russians will sanction our ideas because we are offering the only type of communism which can have an impact in Italy, France and the rest of Western Europe?

Liehm—Communism . . . communism . . . we were not thinking in terms of "*communism*"! Ironically, I had to come to the West to hear the word used at the drop of a hat, and to be made to use it myself.

Urban—Let's call it "socialism" then. We need not go into the semantics of the two words for we know what we mean—except perhaps to say that neither the Czechs nor the Russians claim that they have as yet entered the promised land of communism or that they know what it will be like when they do.

Liehm—This type of vocabulary is scholastic prattle. It has not been used in Eastern Europe since the death of Stalin, and it would be misleading and nonsensical if I tried to interpret the Czechoslovak reform movement in terms of "communism." Splendid theories about the "stages of socialism" and the arrival of the "classless" society! Why, they have been laughed out of court in Soviet Eastern Europe since the mid 1950s!

What we *were* vaguely hoping to do was to combine democracy with a broadly conceived socialism, and by so doing offer one possible example, not so much to the Communist parties in Western Europe as to Western society as a whole.

Urban—You were trying to answer the problems of advanced, urbanized, mass industrial societies—or so I have heard some of your comrades say, *after* the event, to be sure.

Liehm—Yes, that was the general thrust of the Prague Spring without anyone realizing it at the time. When Dubcek took over in January 1968 we had no model in mind. To be frank with you, we didn't have the vaguest notion where we were going. The whole Prague Spring was one long improvisation, but that is what one has to expect at a time of revolutionary change.

Our principal objective was simple and practical—to improve the country's situation, and more particularly to do something about our disastrous economy. But as more and more people from abroad came to see us wondering if we knew what we were doing, we were forced to rationalize our muddle and appoint a "model." That is how "socialism with a human face" came into being—rather late in the Prague Spring—more as a response to inquisitive foreign journalists and academics who were anxious to detect a "trend" and pin a label on it, than to any spontaneous domestic need. The phrase was not much in use in Prague until well after the occupation.

Urban—I still marvel at your optimism. Take the case of Cestmir

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cisar with his remarkable speech on 6 May 1968 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Marx. What he was saying was simple enough: the "monopolistic interpretation" of Marx by Lenin was unacceptable to the Czechoslovak Party. It had created a rift in the world communist movement which could only be healed if the monopolistic interpreters changed their ways. Either the Soviet Communists joined Prague's side of the argument or Prague would go its own way.

Although Cisar's speech was decked out with the usual disclaimers ("anti-Sovietism is and remains a weapon of imperialism . . . and the Czech and Slovak peoples have nothing in common with it . . .") his message was a clear challenge to Soviet authority in Eastern Europe. So clear indeed was the challenge that on 14 June 1968 Academician Konstantinov answered Cisar in *Pravda*. Leninism, he wrote, was not just a Russian but an international Marxist theory. Its validity was world-wide. Only the enemies of "socialism"—right-wing revisionists, splitters, Maoists—could argue otherwise.

This was (to my mind) an unmistakable indication that the Soviet leaders would brook no attempt to weaken their control over Eastern Europe. And we must admit that you *were* challenging Leninism—the *raison d'être* of the Soviet Communist Party and perhaps of any Communist Party.

Liehm—None of this was self-evident at the time. For one thing, the Soviet Communists had themselves demolished one of the supports of the system—Stalinism—and it was not unreasonable to assume that we could widen and enrich Soviet political thinking: Khrushchev's policies had run their course, Khrushchev himself had been removed, and the Soviet leadership was trying to plot out a new course—we thought we could help them.

For another, we could see that the Russians were not completely inflexible in their East European dependencies. They were tolerating a powerful Catholic Church in Poland; they had accepted Polish private farming, and made other concessions of a kind that would have been unimaginable in the Soviet Union itself. Why would they not accept reforms by a thoroughly trusted, friendly Party, especially as our reforms represented (as we thought) the creative interpretation of Marxism

Urban—But you do appreciate the criticism, don't you, that Prague was in too much of a hurry, and that less haste might have given you better results?

Liehm—I have heard such words of *ex post facto* wisdom before. My answer is—No. If we had proceeded with greater caution; if the Prague events had been controlled (and I am leaving aside the question whether they *could* have been controlled) we would have arrived at something like Gierek's Poland—not the Prague Spring. That is not what we wanted. The Prague Spring was what it was because it was a

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

free and spontaneous drive for reform, not an exercise in window-dressing. Our critics say that it would have been better if Husak, not Dubcek, had been elected to lead the Party in January 1968, because he would have imposed a slower and better controlled liberalization and avoided offending Soviet sensibilities. May be so—but if that is your choice of the means then you cannot say that your objective is a thoroughly reformed socialist system. Husak, as I say, would have led to a Gierek type of Czechoslovakia, and my estimate is that sooner or later the Russians would have imposed their "Treaty" on a more or less willing Husak too.

Urban—I would say "more" rather than less. An important document has recently come to light which shows Husak, in 1944, to have been a vociferous advocate of the incorporation of Slovakia in the Soviet Union.

Liehm—Yes, in 1944 Husak was an unambiguous Moscow loyalist. The point I would emphasize is that the Czechoslovak people decided to act as if they were in a position to act freely. They found themselves in the clutches of an antiquated and totally inadequate political and economic system which they knew had to be thoroughly changed. This could not be done unless they resolved to look neither left nor right but go ahead and do what they thought was right and necessary. I grant you that we may have been naïve from the geopolitical and strategic points of view, but my point is that no Prague Spring would have come into being if the people of Czechoslovakia had kept a worried eye on how the Russians might react. Revolutionary change is not brought about by careful circumspection.

Urban—But surely after the Dresden meeting there was no excuse for not knowing that the Russians considered Prague to be their internal affair and would act accordingly?

Liehm—The wagon was rolling down the slope and no one had the power to stop it. You could only derail it—and that is what the Russians eventually decided to do. But I am firmly convinced that at the end of the slope, which was near, the reform movement would have levelled out to the great benefit of the Soviet Union as well as Czechoslovakia.

Urban—Would it not have been politically wise, certainly after the Dresden warning, to seek Western support—not in any military sense (which was not on the cards) but in that of trying to make it politically and economically expensive for the Soviet Union to march on Czechoslovakia? Would it not have been reasonable for you to argue: if the penalties of invasion are made sufficiently clear to the Soviet leadership, the more liberal elements in it will find it easier to press home their case against the killing of our experiment?

Liehm—No, we were careful to do no such thing, partly because we had learned from the Hungarian precedent that even a declaration of

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

neutrality would be read as a direct challenge to Soviet hegemony, and partly because we knew that without active Soviet concurrence our chances of success were nil.

I remember having lunch in Prague with a highly-placed American, and later with a German politician. Both asked me the same question: "Is there anything we can do to help you?" My answer was "No," which was, come to think of it, perhaps another poorly thought-out response. Mind you, it was obvious from both conversations that neither the American nor the German was thinking of offering us any *active* help. "If you can work your reforms with the Russians, fine—we'll be with you, but don't get yourselves into a Hungarian-like situation"; this was the drift of their reasoning.

I suppose we could have said: "It would be very helpful if President Johnson quietly warned the Russians not to interfere with us"; but the fact is that we didn't even say that. We believed that our only chance of success was that the Russians would, for one reason or another, accept what we were doing. This was certainly my personal conviction.

"What would you do if the Russians *refused* to understand your position?" I was asked by my CBS interviewer. "If the Russians don't understand, we will have reached the end of the road and lost, and I personally would no longer want to live in this country."

That is why I left Czechoslovakia.

Urban—Should Czechoslovakia have offered armed resistance?

Liehm—This question has often has often been asked with undertones of a certain reproach: "The Yugoslavs fought, so did the Israelis—why didn't you?" Well, Czechoslovakia's situation was very different from Yugoslavia's both during the war and in 1948. For one thing (the most important) Dubcek, unlike Tito, was not in command of the Czechoslovak armed forces. These were in Russian hands and had been, under the Warsaw Pact, for 20 years. We could have organized large-scale resistance by the police and by civilian organizations—a fine gesture but also an act of suicide. As to the parallel with Israel: since its foundation as a state, Israel has had one of the world's superpowers, the US, to back it with the full weight of American diplomacy, and to supply it with arms. Without them, Israel would have vanished from the map many years ago.

No one was ready to help Czechoslovakia. I get a little annoyed when I hear people say, first, that we had acted far too precipitately and committed psychological suicide, and then accusing us in the same breath of lacking the courage to commit physical suicide as well!

Urban—But isn't it one of the conditions of keeping a sense of nationhood alive that national independence, if mortally challenged, should be defended with all means at a nation's disposal, including the lives of its sons and daughters? 1938, 1948, 1968—aren't these gravestones on the road to national self-liquidation?

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Liehm—We have all been searching our hearts on this question for a whole decade. What you say sounds like stirring stuff, but it does not, precisely because it is so beguilingly simple, do justice to the problem we were facing.

First, there is nothing peculiarly Czech about non-resistance. The German attack on Norway, for example, met hardly any resistance, and one could quote other examples. More important, it is my considered opinion that the responsibility for everything that happened in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and 1948 goes back to 1938. The non-resistance and defeat of Czechoslovakia did not arise from an enfeebled Czechoslovak national consciousness; much rather were they the end-results of a crime for which responsibility must be laid at the doorstep of Britain and France who delivered Czechoslovakia to Hitler in 1938 and destroyed the Czechoslovak people's and the Czechoslovak Army's will to resist. Our occupation by the Soviet Union in 1968 was not due to détente or Yalta, but to the 1938 Munich agreement which demonstrated the Western powers' unwillingness to do anything for a state which they had themselves created.

By abandoning it to Nazi Germany they were abandoning it, in fact, to Soviet imperialism as well, though the Western statesmen, such as they were in 1938, were much too short-sighted and uninformed to foresee that that was what they were doing. No matter how critical one may be of Benes on this or that issue, he was absolutely right not to permit Czechoslovakia to be launched on a course of self-destruction. He found himself abandoned by his allies and he very reasonably concluded that he would not have Czechoslovak blood shed for British and French duplicity and cowardice.

The Czechs and Slovaks had, of course, their own guilt to answer for, and they have had a terrible price to pay for it—but they were accomplices to the crime, not its originators. Suicide would not have helped them any more than it did the Poles who were repeatedly massacred for their courage in the nineteenth century. The Czechs did not fight and did not get massacred; but they were in the same boat with the Poles when Hitler was ruling Europe, and they are in the same boat with them now.

Urban—Yet the myth (or is it the reality?) of national character survives, and perhaps this is not always a bad thing. In 1956 the Poles and Hungarians had the traditions of 1848 to draw on. Without it the 1956 uprising might have taken a very different course or not occurred at all.

Liehm—*Of course* national myths are important—and their destruction I might add, is often as important as their survival. A few years ago Max Ophuls made an important documentary film about France under German occupation—*Le Chagrin et la Pitié*—which I periodically show to my American students here in Philadelphia as part of their education in contemporary history. Their reaction is invariably: " God,

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

we didn't realize that the French were such a cowardly nation under the occupation—we thought every Frenchman worth his salt was in the Resistance and fought the Nazis to the bitter end!" The film, as you know, shows wartime France in unflattering but entirely truthful colours.

Urban—Yes, I saw it, surrounded by a hushed audience, in a small Parisian film theatre.

Liehm—Well, after every one of these filmshows I spend hours trying to explain to my students that France was not a cowardly country; that there is no such thing as a cowardly nation; that the human condition has a way of landing individual men and women in predicaments from which there is no honourable escape or no escape at all. Young people find this hard to understand.

National self-image and stereotypes of other nations are almost indestructible. Ophuls' film could not be shown on French television because it offended—at any rate in the eyes of the official keepers of French national self-respect—the self-image of France as a nation of stalwart resisters. It had to be shown in private cinemas almost to the exclusion of the public, but the fact that it could be shown at all deserves one cheer (and no more than one cheer) for French democracy.

No one likes to see his national myth shattered. In Poland, Vajda's films—*Ashes and Diamonds* and the rest—cause an uproar almost every time they are shown because they run against certain ingrained notions the Poles hold of themselves as a people carrying a set of untouchable virtues. Anyone who tries to put down Czech national myths also runs into trouble. The Germans suffered from an especially virulent variant of the same disease but the Second World War and its aftermath put them through a thorough cure. It is, I think, important that from time to time every nation should take a fresh look at itself and consign to the fire its totems and shibboleths.

But, to return to the point that trapped us into the discussion of national myths and prejudices: it would be quite unjustified to say that the Czechs did not fight because there is a piece of machinery missing from their national psychological equipment.

Urban—Yet, ironically, this is what Marx and Engels thought of the Czechs: "They kissed the rod that had chastised them until the blood came," Engels wrote (on 16 February 1849) of the defunct Prague uprising.

Liehm—Marx and Engels wrote some very bad history, especially about the non-Polish Slavs, but, to repeat, it would be a complete misjudgment to claim that the Czechs did not fight because they were congenitally weak or so conditioned to subjection that subjection had become a way of life. They did not fight because in 1938 they had been delivered on a platter to Hitler's Germany, and as a result of that betrayal they found themselves after the Second World War

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

locked in the embrace of the Soviet Union. When Britons and Frenchmen remind us nowadays that on 20/21 August 1968 we ought to have stood up to the Russians, my answer is very simple: "Have *you* searched your hearts about the cowardice and shortsightedness of Chamberlain, Daladier, *The Times* and your political class at the time of the 1938 Munich Agreement?" Any questioning of the responsibility for 20/21 August 1968 must start with Appeasement and the Munich surrender.

The Expropriation of the Communist State

Urban—We have diverged: what was the heart of the appeal of the Prague reforms for the West European Communist parties?

Liehm—The Prague Spring had one great attraction for them: unlike the Hungarian events in 1956, it was entirely the work of a Communist Party even though by June–July, 1968, our Party was not fully "Communist" in the traditional sense. The Italian and Spanish Communists could, therefore, identify with it with a perfectly clear conscience, recognizing in it everything they themselves were most anxious to achieve: the democratization and de-Russification of socialism headed by a Communist Party which was of good report in Moscow. This was the Italian and Spanish attitude—but not the French. The French Communists (as could be expected) faithfully followed the Soviet line and were extremely hostile to us. Nevertheless, the Prague events caused a stir among French Communist intellectuals, and Waldeck Rochet's attempt in the summer of 1968 to call a European Communist conference at which the French would have mediated between Czechs and Russians may well have been a response to that. The conference never materialized: the Czechs feared that the conference would put them under Soviet pressure via the French Stalinists and, for reasons of their own, the Russians too were reluctant to participate. We still don't know whether Waldeck Rochet was acting for the Soviet Party or whether he launched the idea on his own but ran, for one reason or another, into Russian objections—objections he apparently regarded as a grave set-back, so much so that the eventual collapse of his health and the end of his political career have been variously ascribed to it.

The point to remember is—and I am deliberately repeating myself—that in the eyes of the West European parties Prague offered the first opportunity for the de-Russification of socialism without getting into conflict with Moscow. Eurocommunism and the crisis of the West European Communist parties started with that expectation, and the shattering of that expectation. The Western Communist parties clearly could not—and did not—accept the Soviet explanation that the Prague Spring was paving the way for an imperialist takeover of Czechoslovakia. For the reasons I have already given, a similar fabrication about the 1956 Hungarian revolution could, just, be made to stick, but

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the case of Czechoslovakia it could not. From then on it was clear that the de-Russification of West European communism could be achieved only in the teeth of Soviet opposition, and this meant that Eurocommunism was to be first and foremost a matter of emancipating the Western Communist parties from Soviet control and Russification.

Urban—But has Eurocommunism not by now gone way beyond that—to de-Leninization, as for example in the case of the Spanish Party?

Liehm—I am not sure that it has. The Russification of the Communist parties was a wide-ranging process. Its influence will prove very difficult to eradicate. In the 1920s the all-important Soviet *avant-garde* —the Russian painters, writers and poets—were very close to those in Western Europe. They influenced their Western counterparts as much as they were influenced by them. The intellectual leadership in the two camps was virtually interchangeable. Alexander Blok was as important in Paris as Gide was in Russia. Stalinism put an end to all this. It foisted not merely a particularly odious Russian type of despotism on the organization of all the world's Communist parties, but it also perverted and degraded their life-styles, their manners and culture by demanding that they be modelled on Russian life-styles, Russian manners and Russian cultural stereotypes. This, more than anything else, made the Soviet leadership of the world communist movement entirely intolerable, and especially so for the West European parties.

I keep coming back to this point because it explains both the Prague Spring and the attraction it had for the West European Communists. De-Leninization, if it comes, will be a bonus. The Spanish do appear to have de-Leninized to some extent; the Italians uncertainly so; the French not at all. We could see before the 1978 French elections that the French Communist Party willingly risked throwing away the Left's chances of electoral victory because it feared that cooperation in government with a strong Socialist Party would subvert its Stalinist organizational structure and undermine its ideological orthodoxy. Its innate Stalinism and its loathing of the Socialists proved stronger than its will to defeat Giscard.

Urban—What particular lessons of the Prague Spring have the West European Communist parties drawn from it? I have especially in mind the promise, clearly implied in what was being said and done in Prague in 1968, of a multi-party system. You did yourself imply it in various articles you wrote at the time. In *Literarni Listy* (13 June 1968) you called for a new Constitution to be endorsed by a referendum. "After its final adoption," you argued, "political life would develop within a new framework which I would not venture to predict at this juncture." But you added that the enactment of the new Constitution "would also mark the end of the mandate entrusted to the enlarged National Front."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Liehm—I don't think it took much reading between the lines to get my meaning. I stood for a multi-party democracy without equivocation.

Urban—Yes; but are we to assume that today's Eurocommunists, if they came to power, would permit a genuinely multi-party parliamentary democracy to exist? The Prague events were not allowed to advance far enough to give any indication whether your reforms would have resulted in a multi-party democracy as the phrase is understood in Western Europe, or in a National Front of some kind, in which case the Communist Party would have retained its supremacy and the other parties would have functioned more or less on sufference within the limits of "socialism."

Liehm—You have put your finger on the principal problem: would the Eurocommunists *permit* a genuine democracy to function?! You are clearly assuming—and I dare say you are, if we think of the French Communist Party, assuming quite correctly—that if and when the Eurocommunists come to office they would want to be in a position to *permit* or not to permit a multi-party system. This is the whole question: as long as there is any talk of a West European Communist Party arrogating to itself the right to permit or not to permit this or that thing to happen, there is *no* Eurocommunism—there is only a prolongation of the life of the old and unregenerate type of communism which may, once it has secured complete control over the state, permit a little leeway here and some concession there, but will basically allow nothing to interfere with one-party rule.

The hallmark of a genuine Eurocommunism will be precisely its willingness to take the basic decision not to stick to the Russian rules of the game but, on the contrary, give up the whole principle of one-party control and join the adult section of the human race. Many Eurocommunists are fervent supporters of this civilized variety of socialism, but the politburos of the various West European Communist Parties are still deeply torn by the question whether a party that has given up the idea of single-party rule can go on calling itself a Communist party.

Urban—Once these parties have genuinely de-Leninized and decided to stick to the words of Marx alone, I cannot see why they should balk at the prospect of a multi-party system. Marx insisted that there could be no such thing as a Communist party, much less a one-party state ("The Communists do not form a separate party. . . . They do not set up sectarian principles of their own . . ." etc.) At the same time he qualified his objection to a Communist party by observing that Communists do not form a separate party "*opposed* to the other working-class parties"; that they have no interest "*separate* and *apart from* the proletariat as a whole." These qualifications of Marx are strong enough to justify the limitation of an even genuinely Eurocommunist multi-party system to those parties which are prepared

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to work within "socialism," and this is in fact what Eurocommunists like Lombardo Radice broadly envisage.

Liehm—True, Marx did not support the idea of a Communist party, but he spoke, unfortunately for us, from the 18th and 19th century historical experience—from the experience of a strong centralized state which dominates the political scene: whoever controls the state, controls its economy and its social structure. Therefore the creation of a socialist society, too, depends on the control by the proletariat of the whole apparatus of the state. Now Marx does not say that this take-over requires a centralized force called the Party: he talks of the dictatorship of the proletariat instead. But you cannot have a dictatorship by five parties—hence the logic of Marx's whole strategy carries in it the demand for the rule of a single, dictatorial party.

Urban—But surely this dictatorship was meant to be transitional: one station on the way to the classless society . . .

Liehm—"Classless society"—this is airy-fairy stuff. The truth is that Marx does not say what the dictatorship of the proletariat is transitional *to*. Lenin too is very hazy on this point. What we *can* see is that the withering away of the state and the promised land of "communism" have been postponed *ad Graecas kalendas,* but the Soviet state is strong and getting stronger.

What is most striking about Czechoslovakia today is not only that the Party is in sole control of the whole of the country's life, but that the Party *owns* the country.

Urban—A return of the patrimonial state well known to us from tsarist times . . .

Liehm—It means that, too. The crucial point is that the nationalization of the economy leads inevitably to the one-party state, and that to dictatorship. As long as your ideology demands the conquest of the state and through it the conquest of the national economy, you cannot talk of a pluralistic policy, much less of a multi-party system. Locke pointed out a long time ago—and nothing has happened since his day to refute him—that the basis of political pluralism is the pluralistic ownership of property. This is not a plus or minus point for capitalism or communism. It is a fact of life that pluralism within a socialist order can only exist if the principle of the plurality of ownership is upheld.

The Prague reform movement challenged the ownership-role of the Communist Party. It did not challenge it immediately. In the early stages of the movement the idea was to change the Party, and through the Party the system. "Democratization of the Communist Party" was the slogan when the wagon started rolling, and this was followed by calls for the democratization of the press, culture, the judiciary, and so on. Only much later was it realized that none of these things

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could be achieved without the democratization of the economy. Eventually the call came for what I regard to be the key element in the whole reform movement—the call for the *expropriation of the State.*

Urban—In Ota Sik's version of the history of the Prague Spring (to return to my earlier point) the economic reforms came first and political liberalization followed, in a rather Marxist sequence, as its necessary concomitant. Having learned from the 1956 Hungarian example that the Russians would not tolerate a frontal attack on the system in the shape of political reforms, the Czechs, he argued, decided to ease *their* reforms in through the economy.

Liehm—Sik and his collaborators had to weigh the probable consequences of following the Yugoslav model of economic *decentralization,* and that gave them justified cause for anxiety. Why? Because in 1966, 1967 and 1968 the Czechoslovak economy was in very deep trouble. It needed decisive leadership—and that meant *centralized* leadership—to pull it out of the mud. If you install workers' control, self-management and the like at a time of great economic weakness, your chances of rescuing your economy from collapse and putting it on its feet again are negligible. For all these reasons Sik's reforms were *centralized* reforms which did not, in their original form, threaten the patrimonial role of the system. But that was not the end of the story.

We in the Prague reform movement had realized for quite some time that our first step to ensure that the Russians would not interfere with us was to isolate those elements inside the country who saw their personal interests threatened and were preparing to undermine the reform movement even to the extent of calling for "fraternal assistance" from the Soviet Union. (We imagined in our naïvety that without a call of that kind the Soviets would not find it possible to invade us!) We therefore went about isolating these people without using any violence, and I think you will agree that in this respect at least our success was complete. When the crunch came on 21 August 1968, there were no quislings among us.

But how was the isolation of these potentially pro-Soviet elements to be achieved? By June and July we realized, and Sik was among the first to realize, that a pro-Soviet putsch could only be warded off if power was immediately devolved to the workers. In July and August Sik and his colleagues admitted that they had been wrong: power, including, of course, economic decision-making, had to be decentralized and vested in the Works Committees. It had to be done, not for economic reasons (the state of the economy militated, as I've said, against any such move) but for extremely urgent political reasons. With the devolution of power and "ownership" to the Works Committees, the first steps were being taken to *expropriate the "Communist" state,* and it is an instructive reminder of the great popularity of this measure that when the Soviet forces invaded Czechoslovakia,

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

these newly formed Works Committees were the last to knuckle under to Soviet control.

Urban—"Expropriating the expropriators of the expropriators" to reverse Marx's famous formula for the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Liehm—Yes, if you like: expropriating the state.

Urban—Which the Russians would inevitably describe as restoring capitalism.

Liehm—To which I would retort (with Trotsky) that the Soviet state is state-socialism.

Urban—A point the Italian Communists are now also making.

Liehm—Yes—the Italian Communists have learned one important lesson from Church history: terminology matters. By describing the Soviet system as "state-socialism" they are implying that other forms of socialism are possible and desirable. Also, by talking of Marxism *and* Leninism—not Marxism-Leninism—they let it be known that Marxist socialism need not be a Leninist type of socialism as well.

Now, what did we have in mind when we began to see the expropriation of the "Communist" Czech state as our target? Our starting point was to say that socialism is about the democracy of the workers: the people who produce should decide what happens to the things they produce. We, therefore, perceived our task to be a thorough reform of the existing relationship between production and ownership, realizing—though we were slow in coming to this realization—that every economic reform implies a political reform, and every political reform implies an economic reform. Hence we decided that—with the exception of certain public services and industries such as railways, electricity, mining and so on—property should be taken out of the hands of the state and turned over to the Works Committees as the producers' rightful representatives. We were confident that the pluralization of property-ownership would lead to the pluralization of political interests and that to the pluralization of the system.

The question we have to ask the West European Communist parties, and especially the Eurocommunists, is this: are they prepared to accept the existing West European mixed economies and work for a *progressive* transformation of property relationships? Will they agree that a truly socialist society presupposes a plurality of ownership and that this in turn rules out any idea of a dominating social bloc, "hegemony" and the like—to say nothing of a one-party state?

Or do they still believe, in good nineteenth-century fashion, that socialism means the nationalization of the economy—the expropriation of capital for the benefit of the state—in which case Eurocommunism will amount to little more than a de-Russified form of dictatorship by the Communist Party?

This is the basic issue posed by the Prague Spring, and I don't

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

think it has yet been properly understood by the West European parties—not even by some of the Eurocommunists.

Urban—It was not clearly stated at the time—perhaps it could not be clearly stated?

Liehm—It was not stated in exactly these words, but it was implied. Our problem was that the idea of the expropriation of the state and the resulting pluralization of the system did not come up until very late in the Prague Spring. We had, as I have just said, first to defeat the economic reformers' argument that the only way in which the country could be put on its feet again was through maintaining a strong, centralized economy.

There is one observation in Marx which seems worth remembering in the context of the present discussion. Marx says that the transition from one socio-economic order to another occurs at a time when the new order is already fully grown in the womb of the old one.[1]

Urban—You are stressing the non-violent strand in Marx's conception of social change, whereas the dominant emphasis in both Marx and Engels is on revolution accomplished by violence. Engels was still fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat shortly before his death in 1891, and even a Eurocommunist like Carrillo, writing in 1977, says that " the revolutionary violence of the exploited classes is a sacred right, in certain conditions, so that those classes can liberate themselves and put an end to oppressive violence "—a catch-all formula vague enough to leave all of us free to interpret it in any way we like.

Liehm—Yes, you are quite right to say that I am stressing the peaceful strand in Marx's conception of social change—and that is precisely what the Prague Spring was about. But even the " violent " strand in Marx is merely preparatory, as a woman's labour is preparatory, to the birth of a new life. This is the meaning of Marx's metaphor.

To return to the question of pluralism: the Eurocommunists will have to tell us whether they still believe that socialism means the nationalization of the means of production, which must, as we well know, end in the death of pluralism and ultimately in the despotism of a single party; or whether they believe the Marxist principle I have emphasized to be right and will therefore opt for the piecemeal change of the existing system by promoting workers' participation and workers' control so that a new socialist society may eventually emerge from the existing one. As things are at the moment, I do not trust the Eurocommunists. Their vocabulary is still one of " taking over " the state and changing society from top to bottom.

[1] The passage referred to occurs in Marx's Introduction to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*:

> No social structure ever perishes before all the productive forces for which it has room have developed; and new, higher relationships of production never appear before the material conditions for their existence have formed in the womb of the old society itself.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This sounds to me like the old ventriloquist! Western Europe provides daily illustrations of the fact that in the 1970s no government can govern without the cooperation of the trade unions. In Britain, for example (to take the most extreme case), union power and the abuse of union power have greatly contributed to the country's miserable economic performance. Why? Because the British unions have clout but no responsibility. They can cripple the British economy in the name of fighting for the working man's interests and at the same time disclaim responsibility for the economy. In a participatory democracy leading to socialism the unions would be vested with a good deal of responsibility—they would, therefore, have to make their economic decisions with a great deal of circumspection.

Czechs and Italians

Urban—Aren't you a little hard on the Eurocommunists? Certainly the Italo-Communists, with their honourable record of resistance to Stalinism, at any rate since 1956, and Gramsci as their home-grown mentor, would agree with some of your conception of socialism even though their notion of "hegemony" is suspect.

Liehm—The nature of Italo-Communism is not easy to read. On the one hand, the Italian Communists were shaped in illegality, in constant contact with other forces of the opposition, which made it possible for them to avoid the grosser forms of Stalinism (the fully Stalinist parties, like the French and the Czech, all come from countries in which Communist parties lawfully existed between the two world wars). On the other hand, the Italian Communists were heirs to the spirit of Catholicism—they needed, and built, a Church (I incline to believe that Catholic political culture is more conducive to a strong communist movement than Protestant political culture. If Protestantism means the abolition of intermediaries between God and the individual and is thus hostile to church structures, then it seems to me clear that there can arise no mass communist movement in any Protestant country—as, in fact, none has arisen.)

Thus the Italian Communists escaped Stalinism while at the same time they enjoy mass support by virtue of an element of "catholicism" (with a small c) in the Italian national tradition. And then—they had Gramsci; a national Leninist or, if you like, a national Marxist and Leninist thinker of undoubtedly great intelligence.

But how does any of this help them? The questions which the Prague Spring has posed and tried to answer—more particularly, the problem of pluralization through the expropriation of the State—are problems for the 1980s and 1990s and beyond. Some Italian Communists are still trying to find Gramscian answers to Italian society as it was in the 1920s and 1930s. The problems we are concerned with cannot be solved with Gramscian means because in Gramsci's days they did not exist. There are many things in Gramsci that are worthy of respect,

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but there are few Gramscian solutions to the problems of West European society at the turn of the twenty-first century.

The Italian Communists are, therefore, in a dilemma. With one half of their selves they can see that such socialism as is open to man to realize must be a slow and pluralistic affair. But the other half of their split personality confronts them with the question: if we abandon the idea of taking power in the name of the working class, if we no longer pursue socialism via the state, but, on the contrary, content ourselves with the democratization of ownership—aren't we abandoning the revolution? Are we still a Communist Party?

There they have a problem, and I'm not going to answer it for them.

Urban—Surely Italo-Communism does mean abandoning the revolution.

Liehm—It does and it doesn't. The Italian Communists have de-Russified themselves if we can believe their public utterances, but now they just don't know which way to go. They are torn in different directions and there is a great deal of hot air being generated about all of them.

Urban—Shouldn't ideological parties stick to their guns while they are in opposition or, at any rate, not in office?

Liehm—It is certainly true that once an ideologically inspired opposition party has attained power it tends to become institutionalized and to drift to the centre, and it then risks being overtaken both on its left and its right. One may reasonably argue that the Italian Communists have drifted to the centre even while they are still in opposition, and that this is why they find themselves in an ideological and political vacuum. Whatever the cause, their Eurocommunism as it is at the moment does not carry enough conviction, and this will not change until we can see it clearly laid down what precisely Eurocommunism stands for—whether it stands for a political party which would act like any other, accepting without reservation the rules of parliamentary democracy, or whether Eurocommunist rhetoric is a disguise for the Party's unchanging ambitions. Promises will not do. The least we can ask the Eurocommunists is to give us their doctrine. But this is precisely what they have not done.

Urban—It has been argued that in the 1945–48 period Gottwald himself was, potentially at least, a kind of proto-Eurocommunist, and there are in fact dozens of statements he made in that period which appear to prove the point—statements in support of the multi-party system, of Czechoslovak national traditions, of respect for the Constitution and so on. Yet after the take-over in February 1948 all this went by the board.

I should like to put it to you that Gottwald was a prisoner of Stalin, a victim of the enormous might of the Soviet Union sitting on Czechoslovakia's frontiers, and of the unwillingness and inability of the Western allies to thwart Stalin's ambitions. In other words, Gottwald's failure to live up to his potential Eurocommunism was due to

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the whole post-war situation in Central Europe: therefore we cannot deduce from Gottwald's disappointing performance as a "Eurocommunist" that Berlinguer, if he reached office, would behave in a like fashion, because the Italian Communists' geopolitical situation in the 1970s is totally different from the Czech Communists' in 1948.

Liehm—We don't know whether Gottwald *was* a prisoner of Stalin or whether he was a highly *willing* accomplice. He and most of the other post-war Czech Communist leaders had been members of the Comintern; Stalinism for them was second nature. The contrast, at this level, with the Italian Communists is certainly striking because none of the current Italian leaders has spent time in Moscow. They are children of entirely Italian conditions, of the Italian resistance and, let us face it, of Italian fascism, because some of them hail from the fascist movement.

The psychology of extremism, I might add in parenthesis, is all of a piece; the rules of mass psychology are stronger than the programmes of political parties. Take the example of one of Italy's traditional areas of radicalism—Bologna, which is a Communist stronghold in the 1970s and was a fascist stronghold in the 1920s and 1930s.

Much as I should like to believe that Berlinguer's intentions are different from Gottwald's, I should not like to swear that on the day of reckoning he would live up to his promises. I would want to see a Eurocommunist programme laid down point by point before I could answer the question whether the Italian Communist Party has changed. As long as Leninism is tacitly sustained—as long as the Italian Communists have not clearly declared that they don't want to grab the state and run a centralized, monolithic economy—there should always be a suspicion that they may be heading for totalitarianism even if some of them may not realize it. They have as yet not learned the real lessons of the Prague Spring.

Urban—One of the red threads running through the articulations of the Prague Spring is the idea that "socialism" can provide the only possible framework for change. The reformers who saw pluralism or even a multi-party system as clearly desirable still insisted on this context. Let me take your own example. In the summer of 1968 you strongly—and I might add brilliantly—argued for the renewal and extension of the National Front, "not as an end in itself, but merely as a means through which the democratization process works." At the same time, however, you suggested that the proposed Constituent Assembly should be elected on a single slate because "elections of this kind . . . are the only ones which . . . can be held within the foreseeable future." And all this, you wrote, would have to take place within the "Czechoslovak socialist community."

Now the Italian Communists, working in an entirely different context, make a point of emphasizing their unconditional acceptance of parliamentary democracy. But if you confront them with the question:

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would they peacefully leave the corridors of power if they were voted out of office, they express incredulity at the rationality of your supposition. This kind of question, they will tell you, is unrealistic: could any electorate want to exchange a higher form of society—socialism—for a lower?

Putting these two examples together, I cannot help feeling that even the most reform-minded Communists are prisoners of some unshakeable landmarks in their ideology. Surely, they assume, no man of goodwill or sanity can doubt that socialism is the desirable condition to which everything in human nature should aspire!

Now a free society, to which the Eurocommunists tell us they subscribe, includes by definition the freedom to reject the entire socialist context, or else the word freedom is meaningless. How then is one to read the arrogant assumption that "socialism" is the *summum bonum* of human life which only fools or knaves would dare to question?

Liehm—To stick to the Czech case: a great deal could be said in our press in the Spring and Summer of 1968, but there were certain parameters which people more or less respected according to their temperament and their sense of political responsibility. In the six months preceding the Soviet invasion we had an absolutely free press, radio and television, but, as you rightly say, nothing during that time appeared in our media that questioned the socialist basis of society. Was this the result of a genuine consensus? Of national discipline? I don't really know. People were arguing pretty dangerous things in our newspapers—why, then, were they not insisting on the freedom to reject socialism?

Perhaps we were all suffering from a subliminal fear of the context in which we were working—more probably, one had to accept "socialism" in order to be able to transcend "socialism." When Wycliffe and John Huss started the Reformation their staple boast was their loyalty to Rome. Not only that, but they really meant to remain faithful sons of the Church, only the Popes understood much better what Wycliffe and Huss and Luther were about than the Reformers did themselves: the Popes knew that the Church would never be the same again if the Reformers were given their head.

If you look at the life of Solzhenitsyn, or Maximov, there again you can see men who believed in their youth in communist society, until their own experiences, followed by incipient doubts about certain aspects of the regime, eventually led them into frontal and decisive critiques of the entire system. The *language* of these critiques—as we well know from Church history—has initially to be kept within the vocabulary of the prevailing orthodoxy. But that does not mean that the critiques themselves stay within the limits of orthodoxy.

Add to this another factor, equally important. In a single-party state pluralism and opposition do not disappear: they take shape *within* the single party, for they have nowhere else to go; and the drive to reform and perhaps to overthrow the regime also comes from critics

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the system within the single party. For this to be successful, the opposition has to respect the prevailing jargon. I invite you to remember that the present Prime Minister of Spain was a leading member of Franco's Falange and that the Left-radical leaders of the Portuguese upheavals came from Salazar's Army elite.

Urban—On this showing Stalin was right to have Bukharin and Zinoviev shot, and Brezhnev was equally justified in the pre-emptive suppression of Czechoslovakia.

Liehm—Given the grotesque rationale of an inequitable system, they were undoubtedly right—but we do not accept the premises of that system. We do not accept that Soviet socialism *is* socialism; that the denial of freedom *is* freedom; that the suppression of democracy *is* democracy.

Urban—Nevertheless, it is clear from what you have told me in this conversation that you were ultimately aiming at a multi-party system not at all necessarily within "socialism"; that you were working for the expropriation of the socialist state, accompanied by the freedom of the press, assembly and the rest. If you look at all this from the point of view of Soviet national (not to say imperial) interest, can you blame Brezhnev for having acted as the Popes had acted against the Protestants, recognizing better than you did yourselves that you were, in effect, preparing to undermine the Soviet system?

Liehm—The Soviet leaders were acting not only absolutely rationally but they were, from their point of view, absolutely right—and we were absolutely wrong in not perceiving that they were right from their angle! From the very beginning our quarrel with them centred on one point: is the system you have in the Soviet Union "socialism"? Is it the only form "socialism" can take? And when the Soviets answered "Yes," we ought either to have left it at that, or we ought to have prepared ourselves for armed conflict. But, for the reasons we have already gone into, we did not want to face up to that choice.

Urban—The Reformation did not end, of course, with the suppression of the Protestants. Jumping ahead a few centuries, it is also true to say that the 1956 Hungarian revolution did not end with its suppression —as the case of Kadarite Hungary well demonstrates.

Liehm—Yes, whatever the fate of individual Protestants might have been, the Reformation came to be established and accepted. The parallel with Hungary is rather different. Kadar's system is pushing the Leninist-Stalinist type of police state and state-socialism as far as it will stretch without openly disrupting it. The Prague Spring was overstepping these boundaries, and that is why in the Soviet Union as well as in Western Europe the boundaries of the Soviet system are now fundamentally questioned. The end of the Prague Spring is not yet.

Urban—If you were to name one single aspect of the Prague Spring

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that induced the Soviet leaders to invade and to suppress Czechoslovakia, what would it be? My personal impression has always been that it was the freedom of the press and of the other media that struck the Kremlin as particularly fraught with danger. The habit of censorship is easy to fall into but very difficult to relinquish—as the whole history of Russia (and not only Russia) shows.

Liehm—The freedom of our media was certainly a very powerful irritant. Our press in those six months under discussion was, I think, freer than the press in any other part of the world for the simple reason that we had burst the husk of one system without having fitted into any other. While the interregnum lasted, there were no guidelines, no established habits and conventions—everything could be said, and was said. The Russians, if they had been wise, would have understood that with the stabilization of the Prague Spring the press too would eventually have shaken down and observed the kinds of restraint which the Finnish media observe out of a sense of national responsibility and prudence. Other restraints would have imposed themselves by the fact that the press would eventually have become somebody's responsibility—of a trade union, some guild, a council or association—and as soon as you have, no matter how liberally, institutionalized your media, some of your freedom is lost. This was to be expected. What we were determined not to have was political censorship. The Soviets were right in thinking that here our position was not open to negotiation.

Urban—But, taking in the whole landscape of our discussion, would you not say that, making allowances for their perverse terminology, the Soviet leaders were right in claiming that Antonin Liehm and his associates were preparing to hand Czechoslovakia over to the bourgeoisie and capitalism?

Remembering the state of Czechoslovakia in 1968, I personally believe that you could have done a lot worse than hand Czechoslovakia over to capitalism; but were you as a communist not sensitive to the charge? Are you as a socialist not sensitive to it today?

Liehm—I don't suppose I need tell you again why this charge was and is complete nonsense. Not only did we not want to restore "capitalism" but there is, in fact, no constituency for capitalism in Czechoslovakia. No one wants it. The peasants on their collectivized farms are better off than they have ever been. The industrial workers, though they may have massive grievances, and may want to change their situation in a thousand ways, would have little time for anyone who suggested restoring the Bata works to Mr Bata. What there *is* a great constituency for in Czechoslovakia is: individual liberty, the abolition of all nannying and censorship, justice and dignity. And the demand for these things grows with the slow but nevertheless real increase in Czechoslovak prosperity.

Was I sensitive to the Soviet charges?

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When you are young and inexperienced and dependent on what your headmaster or supervisor thinks or says of you, you get into the habit of putting a damper on your conscience and watching your words. For a long time we acted in that manner in Czechoslovakia. We were always extremely conscious of how the Party and Moscow would respond to whatever we chose to say or not to say on any particular issue.

But in the 1960s we began to grow up, and by 1968 we came to feel that our sense of integrity demanded that we pay no more attention to what anyone in Moscow might think of us—and speak the truth. This was also my personal position. I felt that life had become too short for the charade to continue. We were—as we can now see—set on a collision course, but we were right not to allow ourselves to be diverted.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jean-Paul Sartre and Hungary 1956

Peter Deli

THE first editorial in *Les Temps Modernes*, written by Jean-Paul Sartre in October 1945, presented the reader with a definite vision of what the journal stood for. It was to be a journal of commitment to Marxism. The writer and the intellectual, it was argued, should no longer stand aloof from politics.

Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956 forced the writers in *Les Temps Modernes* to redefine the extent and nature of their commitment to the Soviet form of communism. They undertook to do this in a broad context, for they presented their analysis of the Hungarian Revolution within the framework of a study of Stalinism and de-Stalinization. A special edition of *Les Temps Modernes* was devoted to the Hungarian Revolution.[1] It contained an anthology of Hungarian writers presented by François Fejto and two lengthy interpretative articles by Jean-Paul Sartre and Marcel Péju.

The Hungarian Revolution came in what may be regarded as the third phase in the evolution of *Les Temps Modernes*. In the first phase the journal leant towards neutralism. Its writers looked towards a third left-wing force in France independent of both the Communists and the Socialists which might, through its pressure, help the two major parties achieve unity in a Popular Front government. At the same time these writers attempted to maintain a semi-independent position in the international sphere, rejecting the system of great power blocs. Rejection of power blocs involved sympathetic criticism of the Soviet system and far less friendly criticism of the West. The second phase commenced in 1952 when Sartre decided to adopt a stand of closer collaboration with the Communists and to attack those on the Left who rejected the system of power blocs. This phase was marked by his debate with Camus [2] and with the series of articles published under the title *Les Communistes et la Paix*.[3] The third phase was that of de-Stalinization, highlighted by the events in Hungary and Poland, and by Soviet military intervention in Hungary.

The nature of *Les Temps Modernes*' commitment to international communism was thrown into question by the Hungarian Revolution. As well as considering the Hungarian Revolution in the context of a threefold evolution within *Les Temps Modernes*, it is also intended to view Sartre's and Péju's reactions to the Hungarian drama within the

[1] *Les Temps Modernes* Nos. 129–130–131, Nov., Dec. 1956, Jan. 1957, *La Révolte de la Hongrie*.

[2] *L.T.M.* No. 82, Aug. 1952.

[3] *L.T.M.* No. 81, July 1952; Nos. 84–85, Oct.–Nov. 1952; No. 101, Apr. 1954.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

framework of the problem of socialist models. Was the Soviet Union the only model for the international communist movement? How much did the Russian intervention in Hungary destroy the attraction of this model for the writers in *Les Temps Modernes*? To answer these questions, the Hungarian Revolution, as viewed in *Les Temps Modernes*, must be considered in the context of the Soviet-Yugoslav dispute that preceded it and the developments in Poland that accompanied it.

The Hungarian Revolution was preceded by the sensational revelations of Khrushchev at the 20th Party Congress. Although reactions were circumspect, the speech was generally taken as justifying the journal's qualified support for Stalinism. Soviet intervention in Hungary made this position more difficult to maintain. To some extent literary dramatization helped Sartre to do so: "*Faut-il appeler socialisme ce monstre sanglant qui se déchire lui-même? Je réponds franchement: oui.*" [4]

In the period 1945–52 when many authors appeared to feel that they were not obliged to make an absolute choice between the Western and Soviet systems, the role of Yugoslavia assumed great importance. The Trotskyist, Louis Dalmas, in his articles on Yugoslavia [5] emphasized that the whole question of commitment to the Soviet Union had to be reviewed in the light of the fact that the Soviet Union no longer stood alone. When Tito broke with Stalinism but remained Communist it became, in Dalmas's view, more difficult for the Stalinists to claim that they alone embodied the forces of history and progress. This enabled Sartre and Péju to disassociate themselves from the Soviet intervention in Hungary without absolutely severing their links with the international communist movement. Moreover, as the series of show trials in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and other Eastern European countries linked the accused with Tito, the blemishes in the Stalinist system were highlighted by the independence of Yugoslavia.

Shortly before Dalmas's articles appeared in the journal, the editors had tried to deal with the problems posed by the existence of large-scale forced labour camps in the Soviet Union. Two articles [6] devoted to the camps illustrated how they had tried to maintain a balance between their need to criticize the abuses in the Soviet system and their desire to disassociate themselves from other non-Communist left-wing critics who objected to the Soviet system in stronger terms. The same process can be seen in Sartre's articles *Le Fantôme de Staline* [7] where he took special pains to attack the French Socialists before commencing his critique of the Communists.

There was nevertheless considerable variation in some of the other articles and editorials in the period before 1952. Both Sartre and

[4] *L.T.M.* Nos. 129–130–131, Nov., Dec. 1956, Jan. 1957, p. 644.
[5] *L.T.M.* No. 53, Mar. 1950; No. 54, Apr. 1950; No. 55, May 1950.
[6] *L.T.M.* No. 51, Jan. 1950; No. 57, July 1950.
[7] This appeared in the edition of *L.T.M.* entitled *La Révolte de la Hongrie.*

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Merleau-Ponty appeared to be aware of many of the dilemmas facing them. Thus Sartre in his articles entitled *Le Matérialisme et Révolution* [8] implied that he would sacrifice the criterion of intellectual truth that he valued so much only if he could be absolutely sure that this sacrifice would aid the international proletariat. The problems involved in defining what the interests of the international proletariat really were, and whether or not the Soviet Union represented these interests, partially explain the fluctuations in Sartre's position over the years. Merleau-Ponty, for his part, was at one stage fully prepared to subordinate morality to history and in a series of articles entitled *Le Yogi et le Prolétaire* [9] discussed some of the problems posed by Arthur Koestler's novels and by the trial of Bukharin in 1938. The confessions, argued Merleau Ponty, must be explained in terms of historical and dialectical motives—Bukharin confessed because he saw that this was in the interests of the Party at a time when Russia was encircled and isolated and the Revolution was threatened. The assumption that Stalinism was "historically necessary" for Soviet development appeared in Sartre's and Péju's articles in 1956, although Merleau-Ponty went further in arguing that at the time of the Moscow Trials opposition to Stalin assumed the objective aspect of treason.[10]

Whilst Merleau-Ponty had subordinated morality to history, Sartre and other contributors to the journal were on occasion to defend morality. Sartre attacked the Communists for their defamatory campaign against Paul Nizan who had left the French Communist Party at the outbreak of the Second World War in protest over the Nazi-Soviet Pact.[11] Shortly afterwards, another article entitled *En Un Combat Douteux* [12] condemned the French Communists for changing their political line and engaging in a series of political strikes. Both the French Right and Left were subjected to the same criticism and the fear was expressed that Europe would be divided between great armies.

IN 1952 Sartre changed his line and adopted the policy of blocs, with which he had hitherto branded his opponents. The change can be seen in his debate with Camus [13] and in the series of articles that

[8] *L.T.M.* No. 9, June 1946; No. 10, July 1946.
[9] *L.T.M.* No. 13, Oct. 1946; No. 14, Nov. 1946; No. 16, Jan. 1947.
[10] Later in revising this position he was to attack Sartre for supporting developments in the Soviet Union too readily.
[11] *L.T.M.* No. 22, July 1947.
[12] *L.T.M.* No. 27, Dec. 1947.
[13] This controversy was sparked off by a hostile review of Camus' book *L'Homme Révolté* by one of Sartre's collaborators, Francis Jeanson, (*L.T.M.* No. 79, May 1952. Jeanson's article was entitled *Albert Camus ou l'âme révoltée*). Camus replied to Jeanson's review by a strongly worded letter to the Director of *Les Temps Modernes* (*L.T.M.* No. 82, Aug. 1952) which in turn elicited a polemical response from Sartre published in the same issue. Camus and Sartre in fact presented alternative ways of looking at Marxism, the French Left and international communism. Camus in avoiding the main dilemmas that were tormenting the French Marxists forced Sartre to justify his acceptance of them. In part the debate was over the issues of "honesty" and

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

appeared between 1952–54 entitled *Les Communistes et la Paix*. In her memoirs Simone de Beauvoir stated:

> These two pieces of writing had the same meaning; the postwar period was over. No more postponements, no more conciliations were possible. We had been forced into making clear-cut choices.[14]

The most striking feature of *Les Communistes et la Paix*[15] was that Sartre now strongly condemned the non-Communist Left for criticizing the Soviet and French Communist Parties. The Soviet Union's intentions were peaceful and the West was to blame for displaying its aggression through the "provocation" of the Marshall Plan. This argument was not substantially modified by the events of 1956. The main purpose of these articles, however, was to show how the French Communist Party best represented the interests of the French working class. Here Sartre embarked on a long historical survey which went back to 1848. The turning point, he believed, was reached around the time of the First World War when a new working class, the "conveyor belt" class, emerged from the second industrial revolution. The older working class tradition, which Sartre had attacked Camus for defending, was thus outmoded and the anarcho-syndicalists merged with the Socialists and later joined *Force-Ouvrière* to play the role, in Sartre's view, of a workers' aristocracy or workers' elite that had very little in common with the mass of unskilled factory workers. The French Communist Party, Sartre argued, best represented the new masses whilst the skilled artisans found refuge with the Socialists. Defects in the French Communist Party should be explained by corresponding abuses in French society.

Sartre adopted his new line favouring the Communists after their demonstration on 28 May 1952 against General Ridgway's visit to Paris. They failed to mobilize the masses, and Duclos, a prominent Communist leader, was arrested; nevertheless Sartre was deeply moved by the affair. Throughout this series of articles his description of the relationship between the Communists and the workers, dehumanized by the conditions of their work, implied that the workers were incapable of making independent decisions and that the French Communist Party was the only party that had the historical right to make decisions in their name. This argument can only be justified if one accepts all of Sartre's historical assumptions! Sartre himself modified this position

"political efficacy." Camus developed a libertarian position, exposing the dilemmas of Marxists sympathetic to communism. He drew inspiration for this position from non-Marxist revolutionary movements of the past amongst which he counted the Spanish anarchists and the revolt of Kronstadt. Sartre replied by stating that Camus in his desire to retain his intellectual purity was placing himself "outside history." In order to involve oneself fully with "history," Sartre implied it was necessary to make intellectual sacrifices. These sacrifices entailed a certain involvement with the Communist Party.

[14] Simone de Beauvoir, *Force of Circumstances* (Penguin 1968) p. 274.

[15] *L.T.M.* No. 81, July 1952; Nos. 84–85, Oct.–Nov. 1952; No. 101, Apr. 1954.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in 1956 when he criticized the French Communist Party over its stand on Hungary and for its failure to de-Stalinize.

In the special edition devoted to the Hungarian Revolution Sartre's article was entitled *Le Fantôme de Staline*. After condemning the Soviet intervention Sartre attempted to place it in an "historical context" through a discussion of Stalinism and de-Stalinization. The argument in this section was developed in the context of what Sartre referred to as "the Plan" and he asserted that Stalinism had been "historically necessary" for the Soviet Union, but had outlived its time. Returning to Hungarian developments, he concluded that the Russians intervened in Hungary not to save socialism in that country, but to preserve it in the Soviet Union. The fact that he could not accept this action as being in the interests of international socialism led him to examine the contradictions within the movement and to redefine his attitudes to communism, internationally and domestically.

Marcel Péju's [16] article entitled *Du Rapport Khrouchtchev à La Tragédie Hongroise: Le Communisme à l'Heure de la Vérité* was concerned with very similar themes.

Sartre's article began with an attack on the French Socialists. He depicted Guy Mollet as a traitor to socialism, condemning him for his policies in Algeria and Egypt. Suez and Hungary together represented a double tragedy for the French Left:

"*La triste vérité c'est que la gauche française ne peut se définir aujourd'hui que par un double refus.*" [17]

Turning to Hungary, he rejected the arguments of the French Communists in defence of the Soviet intervention and repudiated their view that the fascists were responsible for the revolution. He also rejected the standard Communist argument (similar to that he himself had employed between 1952–54) that protests against Communist policy would divide the workers' movement. Finally he took the French Communists to task for maintaining that the Soviet intervention could not have been avoided. If the Soviet intervention was indeed unavoidable, this very fact reflected badly on the whole Soviet system in Eastern Europe.

Sartre's disagreement with the French Communists on whether or not Soviet intervention was avoidable formed the basis for his analysis of developments within Hungary. He emphasized the fact that there were two Soviet interventions and he attacked the French Communists for concentrating exclusively on that of 4 November and for changing what they had themselves written on the first Soviet intervention on 23/24 October. In answer to the French Communists' claims that the Red Army would not have fired if no fascist danger had existed, Sartre confronted them with the events of 23/24 October and counterpointed

[16] Marcel Péju, with Lanzmann, had influenced Sartre in his fellow-traveller phase. He broke with Sartre in June 1962 over relatively minor divergences on the Algerian War and for personal reasons.

[17] *L.T.M.* Nos. 129–130–131, Nov., Dec. 1956, Jan. 1957, p. 578.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

l'Humanité's interpretation of these events before and after the Soviet troops opened fire on the demonstrators.

Using as his point of departure the first Soviet intervention in Hungary, Sartre attempted to throw light on the phenomenon of "national Communism," comparing developments in Hungary and Poland. Nagy, the "Hungarian Gomulka," came to power too late. The Russians, in Sartre's view, committed the "criminal folly" of firing on the Hungarian workers and Communists and this destroyed any possibilities of constructing a bridge between Hungarian and Soviet interests along the lines undertaken by Gomulka in Poland. The first Soviet intervention thus channelled all political and social forces in Hungary against the Russians, endangering Marxism and leaving the insurrectionists without a Communist programme. By the time Nagy replaced Geroe events had got out of the Hungarian Communist Party's control and it now appeared it might be outflanked on the right:

> *A chaque nouvelle concession, les dirigeants soviétiques sentent leur méfiance se renforcer; ils tiennent Nagy pour un traître. En fait, c'est un communiste sincère que le cours des événements est en train de décommuniser . . . objectivement, tout se passe comme s'il en avait démissionné. Du coup, les masses, après avoir voulu la liberté au sein du régime, réclament celle de se donner le régime qui leur plaît.*[18]

This theme of an evolution to the right formed an important part of Sartre's argument. At the same time however he did point to certain positive features in Hungary on the eve of the second intervention and emphasized that the programme of the insurrectionists was never reactionary. The Russians in Sartre's view underestimated the revolutionary power of the Hungarian workers and whilst they concentrated their attention on the drift to the right they failed to notice a corresponding drift to the left in the form of workers' councils.

Sartre's final judgement on the diverse trends within Hungary remained indeterminate. Péju also attempted to come to grips with Hungarian developments. He contrasted Rakosi's dictatorship with that of Franco. The latter's was a class dictatorship whilst Rakosi's, in Peju's view, could not be characterized as either right or left:

> *Le gouvernement Rakosi, lui, ne représentait ni la "droite" dont il avait brisé les cadres, ni la "gauche" dont il usurpait les titres: dictature absolue mais abstraite, sorte de monstre historique, il réalisait ce chef-d'oeuvre absurde de faire contre lui l'unanimité de la droite et de la gauche, des ouvriers et du clergé, des paysans exploités, comme des propriétaires déchus.*[19]

Finally Péju described the Hungarian Revolution as a spontaneous large-scale equivalent of a wild-cat strike.

[18] Ibid. pp. 616–17.
[19] Ibid. p. 747.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Both Sartre and Péju viewed the Soviet intervention in Hungary in terms of the triumph of a certain political line in Moscow. They refuted Soviet claims that there had been a "white terror" in Budapest. Sartre believed that the Soviet Union made the decision to invade Hungary in the context of the Cold War and the division of Europe into power blocs—the Soviet Union feared that the defeat of communism in Hungary would bring about a world war. Péju provided a different emphasis through his analysis of Soviet foreign policy, stemming from contradictions in Stalinist policy to non-Russian revolutionary movements. Both authors were concerned with assessing the Soviet intervention in Hungary in terms of its significance for international communism and, in their attempts to define their attitudes on this, they embarked on lengthy analyses of Stalinism and Stalin's role in Soviet history.

Sartre's and Péju's vision of Stalinism were very similar to that of Isaac Deutscher's, as promulgated in his book on Stalin.[20] This approach characterized each stage of Soviet history as "determined" and in each stage difficulties and abuses within the system were explained or rather explained away in the context of an overall plan or a broader conception of history. For these authors Stalin played a positive role in constructing socialism. De-Stalinization indicated that the Soviet Union had evolved to a higher state and contradictions in de-Stalinization policies were explained by referring to the remnants of Stalinism. Stalinism had outlived its time and was simply refusing to die.

Both Sartre and Péju presented a similar picture of Stalinism. They stated that its most striking features were mediocrity and stupidity. Nevertheless Stalin's stupidity was "historically necessary" and they argued that he played a positive role in industrializing the Soviet Union.

In Sartre's view Stalinism was imposed on Eastern Europe as part of a necessary Soviet reaction against the Marshall Plan. At the time the Marshall Plan was considered by the Soviets to be a provocation. Sartre blamed the Plan for destroying the slight chances of federation that existed in Eastern Europe and believed that it forced Stalinism to close in on itself. He concluded that whilst the Soviet Union did not colonize the Eastern European countries, it did oppress them. Péju also discussed Stalinism outside Russia and pointed out how in 30 years Stalin had liquidated and demoralized the Communist elite more effectively than the bourgeois police or the fascist persecutions had done. However, whilst Moscow was trying to suppress other revolutions it had to give the appearance of aiding them: for Péju this contradiction paved the way for the triumph of the national revolutions in Yugoslavia and China.

Both Sartre and Péju believed that with the triumph of independent

[20] I. Deutscher, *Stalin. A Political Biography* (2nd ed., O.U.P., London, 1967).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

revolutions in Yugoslavia and China, and with the successful programme of industrialization within the Soviet Union itself, Stalinism was doomed. Stalin was forcing his system on Eastern Europe at the very time when the Soviet Union was no longer the sole bastion of the revolution. For this reason Péju placed special emphasis on developments in Yugoslavia which were preparing the ground for the de-Stalinization crisis and the Hungarian Revolution in 1956.

In a final attempt to evaluate Stalinism, Péju wrote:

> *Dépassé sur le plan intérieur comme sur le plan extérieur, le stalinisme ne s'effondre pas tout de suite: il se survit à lui-même et devient fou. Ayant accompli son rôle historique, n'étant plus dépassé et transfiguré par lui, il se rétrécit, se réduit littéralement à la personnalité de Staline, dont le poids devient écrasant.*[21]

For Péju, Stalinism in Eastern Europe represented an alien importation. Sartre also emphasized that Stalinization had no roots in Eastern Europe. Old Stalinist leaders, isolated amongst a hostile population, were obliged to carry out de-Stalinization policies under orders from Moscow. As Sartre indicated, if Rajk was innocent then the Chief of the Hungarian Government became a murderer. For Sartre, Soviet military intervention in Hungary indicated that neo-Stalinism was flourishing in the Soviet Union. De-Stalinization lay at the core of the crisis in Hungary. The Hungarian Revolution could partially be explained in terms of contradictions between different degrees of de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European satellites:

> *Tout est clair: en Europe Centrale les déstalinisateurs ont voulu continuer la politique de Staline quand, déjà, leur attitude en URSS et leurs propres déclarations la rendaient impossible; ces contradictions, leur mauvaise volonté, leurs demi-concessions ont fini par provoquer le pire et par donner raison aux staliniens.*[22]

Sartre's analysis of Soviet motives for invading Hungary led him to adopt two important standpoints. In the first place he asserted that the Soviet Union had been genuinely interested in saving socialism in Russia itself through its intervention in Hungary. Secondly he emphasized that he himself was obliged to repudiate this intervention and the Soviet conception of socialism put forward to justify it. Thus in analysing the motives of the Soviet leaders he wrote:

> *Mais d'abord il faut écraser l'insurrection. Non pour sauver le socialisme en Hongrie: mais pour le sauver en URSS. . . . Un succès à Budapest et l'Allemagne de l'Est se soulève; si l'Armée Rouge intervient, les soldats de Bonn passent la ligne: c'est le conflit mondial.*[23]

Yet in spite of the fact that Sartre appeared to believe that the Soviet

[21] *L.T.M.* Nos. 129–130–131, Nov., Dec. 1957, Jan. 1957, p. 723.
[22] Ibid. p. 675.
[23] Ibid. pp. 672–73.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leaders genuinely adhered to these arguments, he made it clear that he could not accept the invasion:

> *On dit qu'ils ont voulu sauver la chance mondiale du socialisme. Je le crois. . . . Mais le socialisme au nom duquel les soldats soviétiques ont tiré sur les masses en Hongrie, je ne le connais pas, je ne peux même pas le concevoir: il n'est pas fait pour les hommes ni par eux, c'est un nom que l'on donne à une forme nouvelle d'aliénation.*[24]

Sartre concluded that whilst the survival of the Soviet Union had been essential for the communist cause it was also necessary that the Soviet Union should remain faithful to that cause:

> *Et, bien sûr, il faut que l'URSS vive, il le faut* pour la cause du communisme*: tous les hommes de gauche le reconnaîtront. Mais il faut aussi qu'elle demeure socialiste. La Raison d'Etat qu'elle peut invoquer aujourd'hui, on ne peut plus y trouver qu'une vague référence à un socialisme futur; . . . L'URSS n'est pas impérialiste, l'URSS est pacifique, l'URSS est socialiste: c'est exact. Mais quand ses dirigeants pour sauver le socialisme lancent l'armée du peuple contre un pays allié, quand il font tirer leurs soldats, ces êtres abstraits, sur des ouvriers qui ne peuvent plus supporter leur misère, quand, sans prendre en considération les exigences concrètes de la situation, ils décident de leur action en fonction des incidences qu'elle peut avoir ailleurs, sur d'autres pays, et finalement sur le monde, ils font du socialisme une chimère et transforment l'URSS, malgré eux, malgré elle, en une nation de proie.*[25]

In Sartre's view the Soviet Union had committed a serious mistake in sending Red Army tanks to fire on Hungarian workers. The Russian rulers had thus destroyed one of the bonds that linked the Soviet Union with the international working class. At the very same time, at the height of the Suez crisis, Sartre pointed out how the Soviet leaders, by menacing the British and French politicians with nuclear weapons, were indirectly threatening the London and Parisian proletariats with extinction. It seemed to have become clear to Sartre that the interests of the Soviet Union and the international proletariat could diverge.

Sartre felt that it was necessary to believe in the possibility that progressive elements might prevail over the Stalinists in Russia, but he recognized that he could do very little to influence events there. In France, however, he felt that he could play a more positive role. Nevertheless, he had now adopted the view that the French Communist Party's position was intolerable—whilst it had remained Stalinist, it was also becoming part of the parliamentary system. In Sartre's view, the only hope for the French Left, bitterly divided and indulging in

[24] Ibid. p. 673.
[25] Ibid. p. 674.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mutual recriminations over Suez and Budapest, still lay in the Popular Front. Yet if the Popular Front was to have any chance of success the major changes would now have to come from the Communists. De-Stalinization was therefore the only policy that could serve socialism, peace and unity in France. If the French Communist Party was to de-Stalinize it would have to maintain a certain independence from the Soviet Union. Sartre concluded by stating that he intended to work with all his resources to aid the process of de-Stalinization in France:

> *Notre programme est clair: à travers cent contradictions, des luttes intestines, des massacres, la déstalinisation est en cours: c'est la seule politique effective qui serve dans le moment présent, le socialisme, la paix, le rapprochement des partis ouvriers: avec nos ressources d'intellectuels, lus par des intellectuels, nous essaierons d'aider à la déstalinisation du Parti français.*[26]

Péju was also concerned with the de-Stalinization of the French Communist Party. The failure of the Party to de-Stalinize was due to its servility and to a certain sclerosis. Péju concluded by referring to problems within the international communist movement. The Soviet Union was no longer alone. Other Communist parties, now that the Russian Party had atrophied, could take the destiny of the international communist movement in their own hands and perhaps also influence developments in the Soviet Union itself. The events in Hungary were important for Péju since they questioned the whole orientation of the international communist movement. Polish and French Communist reactions to the Hungarian Revolution were contrasted and he concluded: *"Gomulka rend davantage service à l'URSS en lui tenant tête que Thorez en se prosternant."* [27]

NEITHER Sartre nor Péju actually broke with the international communist movement. They criticized the Soviet intervention and the stance adopted by the PCF but stated that their protests served the interests of international communism in a hostile world of capitalism and imperialism.

Nevertheless in one sense the views of Sartre and Péju did represent an important break with orthodox communism. By emphasizing that the Soviet invasion of Hungary violated the interests of the international communist movement and that it was slowing down the process of de-Stalinization, they were setting themselves up as independent judges and implicitly reducing Moscow's claims to be the sole source of communist orthodoxy. Although the Soviet Union had given birth to the Revolution and its survival was essential for the cause of socialism, as Sartre put it, it was equally important that the Soviet Union remain faithful to this cause. Moreover the myth that the Soviet Union represented the interests of the international working

[26] Ibid. p. 696.
[27] Ibid. p. 752.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

class was damaged when the Red Army fired on the Hungarian proletariat.

In their analyses of developments within Hungary both authors adopted an ambiguous position. Whilst rejecting the official Communist explanations of a "fascist counter-revolution" they did see some dangers in a drift to the right which might have led to the restoration of the parliamentary system and ultimate loss of power by the Communists. Was the Soviet Union right to intervene to forestall this and avoid the risk of a civil war? Neither author fully came to grips with this question but instead each provided an explanation of the Soviet intervention in terms of an analysis of Stalinism and of the de-Stalinization crisis. In the long run both hoped that de-Stalinization would triumph in the Soviet Union and they felt they could help by working with the forces of de-Stalinization in France. This would open the doors for the Popular Front and lead to the adoption of a more progressive colonial policy. The Hungarian Revolution temporarily forced the authors to face the problem of Stalinism; yet, essentially, their main preoccupations remained the unity of the Left in France and the adoption of a progressive foreign and colonial policy.

CLEARLY the Soviet intervention in Hungary brought about a certain change in the attitudes of writers such as Sartre and Péju to the international communist movement. The extent of this change can be exaggerated. For the most part through their analyses of Stalinism and de-Stalinization, they returned to a position similar to the one that Sartre had upheld before 1952. This similarity between Sartre's early position and the one forced on him by the Hungarian Revolution should be seen in the context of his attitudes to power blocs. In the last resort he had always been prepared to support the Soviet bloc against the American, but for some time before 1952 he had hoped that a third force sympathetic to, but independent of, the Communists might acquire some influence in France. By 1952 he had abandoned this point of view and asserted that it was necessary to make a clear-cut choice between the two camps (although he never went so far as to join the Communist Party). The Soviet intervention in Hungary forced Sartre and Péju to support those forces within the international movement that were aiding the process of de-Stalinization. This involved keeping a certain distance from the Soviet and French Communist parties.

The whole problem of commitment can be seen from another perspective. The Hungarian Revolution forced writers in *Les Temps Modernes* to pose the question: how much did the Soviet Union represent the interests of the international proletariat? Through their historical survey of Stalinism, its spread into Eastern Europe, and the effects of de-Stalinization, both Sartre and Péju concluded that whilst

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at one stage Stalinism had been historically necessary and had represented the interests of the international communist movement, it now served no useful purpose and had outlived its time. The Soviet Union was industrialized and no longer isolated. There were other revolutionary models such as Yugoslavia and China, and the events of 1956 proved that developments in Eastern Europe could influence the course of the international movement.

One of the most significant conclusions to emerge from a study of the articles in *Les Temps Modernes* is that the impact of the Hungarian Revolution on this journal was limited. Hungary did not become a new socialist model for Sartre or for Péju. It is true that the Hungarian Revolution forced them to redefine their position in relation to the Soviet Union but Yugoslavia had had the same effect on many intellectuals some years before. Tito's break with Stalin proved that a regime could become anti-Stalinist and yet remain Communist. The Hungarian Revolution dramatically illustrated the fact that the Red Army was prepared to fire on a proletariat. Yet it was Poland not Hungary that became a new socialist model for Sartre and Péju, embodying their hopes of change within the international communist movement. Both authors had praised certain positive features in the Hungarian experience, such as the workers' councils, but they were also concerned with the drift to the Right and feared that the Communist Party might lose its power. Moreover in their analysis of developments in Hungary they continually referred to Poland. Sartre had compared Nagy with Gomulka, regretting that Nagy had been unable to play Gomulka's role in building "national Communism" in his country. Péju's article concluded with the title *L'Heure de la Pologne* where he wrote:

> *Si le communisme a aujourd'hui un avenir, s'il doit être sauvé à Moscou même, c'est à la révolution polonaise qu'il le devra. . . . L'heure de la Pologne, c'est l'heure de la vérité.*[28]

Whilst the Hungarian experiment had been extinguished by the Soviet Army the Polish Communist Party appeared to be successfully renovating communism from within. It was, above all, this ideal of a Communist Party renovating itself from within that appealed to the writers in *Les Temps Modernes*. A survey of the various editions of *Les Temps Modernes* issued in 1957 shows that very little attention was given to the consequences or the implications of the Hungarian Revolution. On the other hand a special edition was issued on Poland. Péju in his preface to an anthology of Polish writers exclaimed:

> *jamais depuis 1917, on n'assista à un pareil mouvement, à une telle remise en question des mythes et des dogmes, à un semblable élan révolutionnaire. Est-il excessif de parler de révélation?* [29]

[28] Ibid. p. 752.
[29] L.T.M. Nos. 132–133, Feb., Mar. 1957, p. 1065.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He then justified this eulogy by making explicit his reason for preferring the Polish model of socialism to the Hungarian:

> *Voilà l'un des phénomènes les plus remarquables de la révolution polonaise: c'est à l'intérieur du Parti, dans les journaux et les organisations dépendant de lui, que grandit et triompha le courant démocratique.*[30]

It remains to be added that the Polish experiment in 1956 foreshadowed that of the Czechs in 1968. In fact the Czechs were influenced by the way the Poles had managed to carry out some reforms without provoking Soviet military intervention.

Finally, by focusing on Poland as an alternative socialist model to that of the Soviet Union, writers in *Les Temps Modernes* hoped that the Poles might stimulate de-Stalinization in Russia itself. Moreover this temporary adherence to the Polish model of socialism created a precedent for a later search for inspiration outside the Soviet bloc.

[30] Ibid. p. 1066.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Two Eyes for a Tooth: The State of Soviet Strategic Doctrine

Peter King

> Inasmuch as the imperialists are preparing devastating nuclear strikes against the economic base of the socialist countries, the latter are compelled to answer in kind. (Sokolovskii) [1]

> The capitalist armies . . . serve reactionary and inhumane aims. Predatory and grasping aims are alien to the Soviet Armed Forces. (Sokolovskii) [2]

> If you are unable to adapt yourself, if you are not inclined to crawl on your belly in the mud, you are not a revolutionary but a chatterbox. . . . I ask, is it proper for a serious revolutionary to believe in fairy tales? (Lenin) [3]

SOVIET strategic literature is mostly committee literature, and shares the faults of the genre. Issues tend to be blurred rather than sharpened, inappropriate compromises are struck, and topics which are too difficult or demoralizing to think about become taboo. Moreover, as Jim Richardson and Thomas Wolfe have emphasized, Soviet strategy largely lacks a civilian input.[4] It is written by marshals, generals and colonels largely (but not entirely) for marshals, generals, colonels and other commissioned ranks. Although there are now two institutes of the Academy of Sciences in the Soviet strategy complex —the Institute for the USA and Canada, as well as the older Institute for World Economy and International Relations—many of the active "civilians" in the former, at least, turn out on closer inspection to be retired military men.

Now strategic analysis by military men, whether retired or active, is not *ergo* inferior. The masterpieces of modern strategic theory—

1 V. D. Sokolovskii (ed.), *Soviet Military Strategy* (Prentice Hall for the RAND Corporation, 1963) p. 409. (On the vicissitudes of this volume in Russian and English down to the third Moscow edition of 1968, see Arnold L. Horelick, "The Strategic Mind-Set of the Soviet Military," *Problems of Communism*, XXVI, 2, Mar.–Apr. 1976.) All references below, except when specified, are to the first edition, 1962, which was not substantially altered subsequently.

2 Ibid. p. 517.

3 Speech to the Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), 7 March 1918, in J. E. Connor (ed.), *Lenin on Politics and Revolution* (Pegasus, 1968) p. 245.

4 J. L. Richardson, "Soviet Strategic Thought: Implications for Foreign Policy," in J. D. B. Miller & T. H. Rigby (eds.), *The Disintegrating Monolith* (Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1965) p. 217, and T. W. Wolfe, *Military Power and Soviet Policy*, RAND, P-5388, Mar. 1975, p. 17.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from Clausewitz to Liddell Hart and Mao Tse-tung—are the work of retired or inactive former military practitioners. Nor do writings of civilian strategists in the United States generally show an anti-military bias, except in doubting the competence of military officers to formulate nuclear strategy! On the contrary, Soviet strategic theory however, lags behind American strategic theory, it seems to me, because institutional military influences prevent it coming to grips with a constraining truism of our times—that all-out nuclear war would mean the cancellation of politics. Thus one will search Soviet military writing in vain for a discussion of the use of military force for objects other than "victory". The diplomatic exploitation of force (crisis management, including crisis management beyond the nuclear brink) is a subject absent from this literature.[5]

My own critique will ignore such para-strategic functions of strategic writing as influencing the allocation of military resources, sustaining combat morale and deterring opponents. I shall take Soviet strategic doctrine at face value as praxis for managing holocaust. Three standards suggest themselves for a critique of Soviet strategy. First, are the elements of the doctrine—concerning both ends and means in strategic combat, as well as forecasts of its likely course—consistent? Second, is the doctrine pragmatically sound—that is, are recommended means related to specified ends in a rational fashion? Third, is the doctrine sound from a patriotic, ideological and ethical point of view? (Does it meet with the highest requirements of Marxism-Leninism and humanity as well as serving the Soviet national interest?)

Many writers have demonstrated that Soviet strategic writings—especially the most authoritative collective works—betray or exhibit unresolved conflicts, for instance between service interests and between the civilian (Party) interest and the military interest as a whole; and that these conflicts are expressed in two distinct (and self-serving) visions of a likely future war. In one vision the military issue will be fundamentally (if not totally) settled by long-range thermo-nuclear strikes delivered primarily by the strategic missile forces in being. In the other, combined arms will play the decisive role: the strategic battle will be followed or accompanied by a tactical battle on the ground, fought with large forces (including tactical nuclear forces) in being supplemented by mass mobilization, and *this* will decide the issue of the war. Needless to say, this second vision belongs to the Ground Forces who make of it a liturgy for resisting obsolescence.

A MEASURE of doctrinal inconsistency is thus almost guaranteed, especially in collective works, and it may not be wholly a bad thing, since it shows, at least, continuing debate. But, in a few cases, inconsistency shades over into hypocrisy and deserves exposing. Preemption of an American nuclear attack has been received Soviet

[5] Richardson, loc. cit. p. 204.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

doctrine for 20 years or so; but adverse Western reaction to this theme in the first (1962) edition of the volume edited by former Chief of the General Staff, Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii, caused denials to appear in the Soviet press. However, Leon Gouré has shown convincingly that Soviet strategy remained geared to pre-emption in the second (1963) Sokolovskii edition, which still approvingly cites Defence Minister Malinovski's speech to the 22nd CPSU Congress as follows:

> . . . the initial period of the war will be of decisive significance for the outcome of the entire war. Hence, the main problem is considered to be the working out of means for reliably repelling a nuclear surprise attack, and the methods of breaking up the aggressive plans of the enemy by dealing him a crushing blow in time. [6]

The doctrinal situation has not changed since 1963:

> At the present stage the Armed Forces should be able . . . to thwart a surprise attack by the aggressor both involving the use of nuclear as well as conventional weapons, and by crushing strikes to defeat the enemy's basic nuclear missile weapons and troop movings [*sic*] . . .[7]

Ritual denunciation of American "militarism" is common in Soviet strategic literature; yet in Sokolovskii we find such passages as the following, which incidentally illustrates the general Soviet vision of a future nuclear war, and affirms its supposedly Clausewitzian character:

> Hence in a future world war, the participants will achieve their political goals not only by the defeat of the armed forces but also by the complete disruption of the enemy's economy and the demoralization of his population. *For this reason, the essential meaning of war, as a continuation of politics with the instruments of armed violence, and its concrete character, now stands out even more prominently than in the past, and the modern instruments of violence become increasingly important.*
>
> Thus, armed conflict has become an even more [*sic*] characteristic form of human activity. The causes are the following: first, enormous masses of people are drawn into modern war as armed forces increase and civilian population is enlisted on a large scale to cope with a number of the military and semi-military problems of defending the rear. Second, the complexity of the widely available modern military equipment requires special military knowledge and skills. And finally, modern war, as never before, demands the utmost use of the economy to provide for the needs of war and, simultaneously, requires the existence of a large

[6] See L. Gouré, *Notes on the Second Edition of Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii's "Military Strategy,"* RAND Memorandum, RM-3972—PR, Feb. 1964, p. 65.

[7] A. Grechko, *Our Struggle for Peace and the Victory of Communism*, p. 64. Cited in N. A. Lomov, *Scientific-Technical Progress and the Revolution in Military Affairs* (Moscow, 1973, translated and published under the auspices of the US Air Force, US Government Printer, Washington, 1974) p. 275. See also V. D. Sokolovskii (ed.), *Soviet Military Strategy*, 3rd ed., 1968 (MacDonald and Jane's for the Stanford Research Institute, 1975) p. 280.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> defense industry as well as a special material and technological base, which are specially created to satisfy the needs of the armed conflict.[8]

To say the least, there are other views, including flatly contradictory ones, of the proper relationship between contemporary military forces and society.

We are also faced with the claim—by the Sokolovskii authors and others—that Soviet nuclear strategy is humanely inspired.

> Socialist society establishes a guarantee for the humane use of the achievements of science even in the field of military affairs.[9]

This is a little hard to swallow when we reflect that Soviet doctrine also boasts that:

> . . . the Soviet Armed Forces have at their disposal powerful long-range weapons, i.e., strategic nuclear-armed missiles. . . . Any state, especially one with a small, densely populated area, can be eliminated from the war, and even annihilated, in a very short time. . . .[10]

Soviet doctrine promises to lay waste large parts of two continents, but we shall see that no serious military or political rationale is offered for doing so. The strategic objective—the security, or, less ambitiously, the survival of the Soviet state and Soviet society—bears almost no relation to the chosen strategic means, total nuclear warfare, but it is precisely on this point that there *is* substantial consistency (consensus). All Soviet strategists are agreed that a future Soviet-American intercontinental nuclear war *must* take the form of annihilating strikes.

> What will be the characteristic strategic aims of a future war and how will it be conducted?
>
> Assuming that the belligerents of both camps strive for [decisive] goals . . . they will employ the most decisive instruments of war—above all, many nuclear weapons—in order to annihilate the opponent or force him to surrender in the shortest possible time.
>
> The question arises: Given such conditions, what is the main strategic goal of war? Is it, as in the past, the defeat of the opponent's armed forces or is it the annihilation and devastation of targets deep within a country in order to break up the organization of the country?
>
> Soviet military strategy answers as follows: The attainment of both these goals must be simultaneous. The annihilation of the opponent's armed forces, the destruction of targets deep in his

[8] Sokolovskii, op. cit. p. 272.

[9] V. Bondarenko, "Soviet Science and Strengthening the Defence of the Country," *Communist of the Armed Forces*, September 1974, translated and printed in *Strategic Review* III, 3, Summer 1975; see p. 128.

[10] Sokolovskii, op. cit. p. 400. When Sokolovskii deplores American plans to employ nuclear weapons "against cities, against the peaceful population" (1968 ed., p. 277) it is hypocritically implied that the Soviet Union has no such plans.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> territory, and the disorganization of the country will be a single, continuous process of the war. The two chief reasons are, first, the need to defeat the aggressor as thoroughly and as quickly as possible, which requires that he be deprived of the military, political, and economic capacity to wage war; and, second, the use of military instruments [now] at hand might well accomplish these [military, political, and economic] aims simultaneously.[11]

However, in the Sokolovskii volume it will be seen from this passage alone that the general formula for destruction is subject to slight but significant variations. Sometimes the "military economy"—at one point defined as the "nuclear, aircraft, missile, power and machine-building industry"[12]—is specified; sometimes not. Sometimes the preferred formula is "disorganization," sometimes "annihilation," especially where small countries are concerned. (No separate or special justification is given for "disorganizing" or annihilating America's allies.) Are there intimations of strategic flexibility here?

Jim Richardson notes that the second (1963) edition of the Sokolovskii volume denies in one passage that only one form of strategic operation will be used in future war.[13] Ben Lambeth shows that Soviet spokesmen have on the whole moderated their criticism of American counterforce theorizing over the years, and he adduces other grounds for believing that official doctrine may not be dogmatically implemented in a war situation. (Chief of the General Staff Kulikov is quoted on "making the necessary amendments" to plans, and former Defence Minister Grechko on the need for implementing plans "flexibly.")[14] As against these points, we should remember that up to now Soviet long-range missile weapons (even MIRVed weapons) have had very high yields and comparatively poor accuracy; that there is much doctrinal stress on destroying "economic potential"—often without qualification—and that a tit-for-tat ethic underlies much of the doctrine. Thus the contention often made, that there is no Soviet doctrine of "city-busting" or population annihilation as such, has little foundation, and seems to reflect the wishful thought that it may be possible to convert the Soviets to some variant of "pure" American counterforce doctrine, or at least that there is a sound basis of potential reciprocity for a counterforce strategy.[15]

WHEN it comes to justifying a doctrine of necessary annihilation, Soviet orthodoxy tells us that the imperialists will be the aggressors, that a world war will be "the decisive armed collision of

11 Ibid. p. 305. 12 Ibid. p. 408.

13 Richardson, loc. cit. p. 210.

14 Benjamin S. Lambeth, "Selective Nuclear Operations and Soviet Strategy," RAND P-5506, Sept. 1975, p. 19.

15 ". . . their targeting strategy . . . even implies limiting collateral damage in so far as possible." William T. Lee, *Understanding the Soviet Military Threat: How CIA Estimates Went Astray* (National Strategy Information Center, New York, 1977) p. 36. "Targeting of civilian populations is conspicuously absent from Soviet strategy." Ibid. p. 38.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

two opposing world social systems,"[16] and will therefore be fought decisively to the death; but also that it

> will inevitably end with the victory of the progressive, communist social and economic system over the reactionary, capitalist social and economic system, which is historically doomed to destruction.[17]

Or in Grechko's words: "We are firmly convinced that victory in this world war would go to us."[18] How?

According to Ben Lambeth's interesting summary of "the Soviet view": "meaningful victory in nuclear war is indeed possible" if Soviet forces pursue a strategy of

> timely pre-emption, seizure and maintenance of the initiative, and sustained offensive operations at high levels of intensity until the enemy's strategic capability is destroyed or his will to continue fighting is broken.[19]

Certainly, if the Soviets hurl themselves into Armageddon with a will —or seem likely to—the United States may be atomically browbeaten or bluffed into reacting passively, or even surrendering.[20] But, also, the United States may not—and then?

Looking to operational capabilities, "seizing the initiative" still makes (very slightly) more sense from an American than a Soviet point of view. The American counterforce arsenal is superior to the Soviet one, and likely long to remain so,[21] despite the recent huffing and puffing from the Right in Washington. When pressed in an interview to the effect that "total" retaliation would serve neither class nor state interests and was not a serious policy, one USA Institute specialist from the Military-Technical Section (a former atomic submarine designer) bravely maintained, American-style, that deterring war is what matters. But he then conceded (suddenly) that deciding on nuclear retaliation would be a very difficult decision for Soviet leaders.[22] If that is so, one must ask, how reliable is deterrence?

[16] Sokolovskii, op. cit. p. 312. One specialist at the Institute for the USA has personally assured me that Soviet nuclear retaliation in case of American attack is essential for the prosecution of the class struggle. (*Interview*, Moscow, 30 Sept. 1976.) Another declared flatly that it would leave an "unequal" situation if the USSR failed its retaliatory duty. (*Interview*, Moscow, 11 Sept. 1976.)

[17] Sokolovskii, op. cit. pp. 312–3.

[18] *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 28 Mar., 1973.

[19] B. S. Lambeth, "The Evolving Soviet Strategic Threat," RAND P-5493, Aug. 1975, p. 8.

[20] The current (1976–78) in the latest of a long series of Soviet scares in the United States is at least as much a product (insofar as it is a product of anything objective) of this Soviet doctrinal high posture as of new Soviet weaponry or "aggressive" civil defence preparations. American ideologues love to take the doctrines of the enemy seriously. See, especially, the US Strategic Institute's house journal, *Strategic Review*, 1976–77.

[21] See Desmond J. Ball, "The Counterforce Potential of American SLBM Systems," *Journal of Peace Research*, XIV, 1, 1977, and Peter King, "All at Sea? A Critique of the American Strategic Force Structure" in David Carlton and Carlo Schaerf (eds.) *Arms Control and Technological Innovation* (Croom Helm, London, 1977).

[22] *Interview*, Moscow 30 Sept. 1976.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In any case Soviet strategic theory has suspiciously little to say on precisely how the promised inevitable victory will be achieved. That nuclear missile weapons are a uniquely decisive instrument in the history of warfare is a point often repeated, and perfectly true.[23] But superpower nuclear wars will not consist solely of *Soviet* attacks. Soviet capabilities for active and passive strategic defence are commended as contributing to a war-winning strategy; but there is no serious attempt to show that damage would be held to levels that would make a Soviet " victory " less than catastrophically pyrrhic.

> Further improvement in antimissile and antiaircraft defence . . . and the organization of a defence against weapons of mass destruction plus other measures should maximally reduce losses from enemy nuclear attacks and should preserve the continued functioning of the interior of the country and the combat capacity of the Armed Forces.[24]

There are (indeed) passages in the Sokolovskii volume which casually admit a distinction between surrender of the enemy and his complete defeat—implying that nuclear war can be halted short of unilateral or mutual annihilation, and conceivably also that the Soviet Union is only going to " win " a world nuclear war if the United States decides not to fight at all, or displays some extraordinary combination of military restraint and diplomatic incompetence.[25] However, there is little room for the American conception of slow-motion strategic conflict characterized by threats, bargaining, limited strikes, pauses, etc. in the Soviet strategic dialectic. Indeed, in that alleged haven or hot-bed of strategic sophistication and flexibility, the Institute for the USA and Canada, I have heard a quite vehement defence of strategic monolithism against the latest variant of American flexible strategic response—the Schlesinger Doctrine.

> Soviet strategy is a carefully prepared whole—arms policy, military doctrine, disarmament proposals—and Schlesinger's concepts would make an " ugly duckling " of it . . . [writes on a *bloknot*:] Nuclear war is 0 or 100 per cent.

When I objected that a good artilleryman would not fire off all his ordnance at once, my interlocutor (who is a retired artilleryman) remarked that " 10 per cent " [*sic*] of nuclear ordnance is enough to blow up the world.[26]

[23] Sokolovskii, op. cit. p. 274.

[24] Ibid. p. 307.

[25] Ibid. p. 105.

[26] *Interview*, Moscow, 11 Sep. 1976. Interestingly, perhaps, Soviet doctrine does not actually specify that any strikes apart from those dedicated to " repelling a surprise attack " (pre-emption) must be rapidly executed—although this is strongly implied in the demand for a quick victory. Grechko at one point even seems to envisage a pause after pre-emption and before " war . . . become(s) a fact." *Kommunist*, No. 7, May 1962, p. 15. Cf. US editors' Note 32, Sokolovskii, op. cit. p. 314.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Precisely! What is the point of moving directly and rapidly to annihilating attacks if the American aggressor has either disarmed himself (on the one hand) or (far more likely) retains forces capable of inflicting annihilation? For almost 20 years Soviet doctrine has favoured a pre-emptive strike, and certain statements of Grechko suggest that pre-emption is the correct response to *any* imperialist nuclear attack. But what possible payoff is there in pre-emption with strategic missiles or even general pre-emption when—assuming *some* success against ICBM silos—such a strategy cannot degrade American bomber capabilities significantly, and can scarcely touch SLBM forces at sea? These are questions which it seems no one is paid to ask in Moscow, although no doubt someone is. And indeed the possibility of " mutual annihilation," recognized in one passage of the first Sokolovskii edition,[27] was de-recognized in the second; [28] and remains very rare in open military writings, although a little more common in official political literature.

SOVIET strategic doctrine is a poor servant of national interest, despite its Clausewitzian flourishes. It scarcely needs further demonstration that it fails to meet the standards of humanitarianism or of *jus in bello*—a doctrine which is enthusiastically (and very disconcertingly) embraced in Soviet writings on international law.

> . . . the use in a possible future war of bacteriological and chemical weapons, and also of atomic weapons, and all other weapons of mass annihilation, is incompatible with the elementary principles of International Law and at variance with the honour and conscience of the peoples.[29]

> International Law lays down that war-time military operations may be conducted only against the armed forces of the enemy and other military objectives, and not against the civilian population. . . . During the Second World War Hitler's Germany conducted military operations not only against the armed forces of the anti-Hitler coalition, but also against the civilian population of these countries.[30]

[27] Ibid. p. 208, see also p. 140.

[28] See Gouré, op. cit. p. 23 and Sokolovskii, *Voennaya Strategiya* (Moscow 2nd ed., 1963) p. 80 G. A. Trofimenko, however, does refer to nuclear war as a " catastrophe on a global scale . . . unparalleled in human history." " On a Pivotal Course," *Journal of the Institute for World Economy and International Relations*, Feb. 1975. Reprinted in *Strategic Review*, III, 3, Summer 1975. Raymond Garthoff has assembled persuasive evidence that Soviet strategic experts are less sanguine about Soviet prospects in nuclear war than their open published writings would suggest. The restricted circulation journal *Voyennaya Mysl'* is of key importance. See " Mutual Deterrence and Strategic Arms Limitation in Soviet Policy ", *International Security*, 3, 1, Summer 1978.

[29] F. I. Kozhevnikov (ed.) *International Law*, (Foreign Languages Publishing House for the Institute of State and Law, USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow, n.d. (1961?)) p. 409.

[30] Ibid. p. 422.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

International Law divides the means and methods of waging war into those which are permitted and those which are not. It stipulates that armed struggle between belligerents must not go beyond the limits of the main aim—that of overpowering the enemy. But the choice of means and methods necessary to achieve this end cannot be arbitrary.

The Hague Convention of 1907 regarding the laws and customs of war lays down that belligerents have not an unlimited right as to the measures they adopt for injuring an enemy. . . .[31]

The Convention . . . prohibits attacks upon or the bombardment of undefended towns, villages, dwellings or buildings by any means. It enacts that the commander of attacking forces, prior to the beginning of bombardment of inhabited points, except in case of assault, shall do all he can to notify his intention.

In accordance with the Convention, belligerents are obliged during the sieges and bombardments to take all measures to spare, so far as is possible, sacred edifices, buildings used for scientific, artistic or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals and places where the sick or wounded are collected on the understanding that they are not used at the same time for military purposes.[32]

The American Armed Forces' use of atomic bombs, which was in no way prompted by military necessity, was a manifestation of cruelty in regard to the civilian population of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Reactionary jurists and some imperialist statesmen try to "theoretically" justify the criminal military practices of the imperialist aggressors. They cite the fact that the contemporary laws and customs of war, which stipulate that a distinction must be drawn between combatants and the civilian populations, are outdated and therefore require re-examination. They groundlessly assert that in modern war the conception of a military objective has extended so far that virtually every person is a potential combatant, while the development of military technology has advanced so far that it is allegedly in practice impossible to adhere to the principle of the inviolability of the civilian population. This "theory" of total war plays into the hands of aggressors. It is pseudo-scientific in character, runs counter to the conscience of mankind and is condemned by its legal awareness. [*sic*] [33]

These resounding declarations sit uneasily with many themes of Soviet strategic analysis, but particularly with one standard objection to the counterforce idea. According to one specialist at the USA Institute,

statements concerning the concept of "limited strategic warfare"

[31] Ibid. p. 424.
[32] Ibid. pp. 424–5.
[33] Ibid. p. 426.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> . . . are essentially aimed at legitimizing the use of nuclear weapons in crucial [*sic*] crisis situations.[34]

According to another, "mutual rules" for limiting nuclear war serve "to untie the hands of the nuclear aggressors and to whitewash such a war from the moral point of view."[35] It is very difficult to see how the Hague Conventions can be implemented in the nuclear era if there is an absolute prohibition on devising "mutual rules" or even unilateral norms for protecting non-combatants in nuclear combat. The quoted assault by international lawyers on the "'theory' of total war" would presumably not be kindly received by the Soviet General Staff. But the compartmentalization of Soviet intellectual life is such that perhaps only the censors at *Glavlit* are aware of the startling contradictions between lawyerly and soldierly Soviet views on nuclear warfare—and *they* may be too busy marketing confiscated pornography to think of a synthesis!

Even allowing that an American nuclear attack on the Soviet Union might be a manifest atrocity and justify *some* form of nuclear retaliation, still an unargued *lex talionis* looms large in Soviet strategy ("... the socialist countries . . . are compelled to answer in kind."[36]) This ethic is scarcely Clausewitzian, Marxist, Leninist or even sensible—but it may be peculiarly Russian. A few conversations in Moscow and a cursory acquaintance with Soviet war poetry suggest to me that *vengeance* may be an important strategic variable in the USSR. When an historically minded American thinks of surprise attack he thinks of that "surgical"—if less than decisive—counterforce stroke, Pearl Harbour. When a Russian thinks of surprise attack he thinks, eventually, of German atrocities in the Ukraine.[37]

For Pasternak in 1941:

> The city will be built again
> From wreckage rent and riven.
> The children's fear, the children's pain
> Will never be forgiven.
>
> It cannot be forgot, the fright
> That woke them up, all cold.
> The foe for every anguished night
> Will pay a hundredfold.

[34] A. Svetlov, "The Soviet Union's Struggle for Military Détente," *International Affairs* (Moscow), Jan. 1976 (reprinted in *Strategic Review* V. 1, Winter 1977. See p. 120). See also: L. C. Semeiko, "New Forms but the Same Content," *Red Star*, Apr. 1975 (reprinted in *Strategic Review*, III, 4, Fall 1975, pp. 84–87); and M. A. Millstein and L. C. Semeiko, "The Problem of the Inadmissibility of a Nuclear Conflict," *U.S.A.: Politics, Economics and Ideology*, Sept. 1976 (reprinted in *Strategic Review*, III, 2 Spring 1975).

[35] G. A. Trofimenko, *Strategiya global'noi voiny* (Moscow, 1968) p. 145. Cited in T. W. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe 1945–1970* (The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), p. 452, N. 117.

[36] Sokolovskii, op. cit. p. 409.

[37] Of course the German attack in 1941 primarily aimed to disarm the Soviet state west of the Urals.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A better age the years will bring.
No witness will be living.
The little cripples' suffering
Will never be forgiven.[38]

For Ehrenburg in 1945:

> Germany is a witch. . . . We are in Germany. German towns are burning, I am happy. . . .
>
> The Germans have no souls. . . . An English statesman said that the Germans were our brethren. No! It is blasphemy to include the child-murderers among the family of nations. . . .
>
> Some say the Germans from the Rhine are different from the Germans on the Oder. I don't know that we should worry about such fine points. A German is a German everywhere. The Germans have been punished, but not enough. . . . No, it's too late. Germany you can now whirl round in circles, and burn, and howl in your deathly agony; the hour of revenge has struck. . . .[39]

When taxed in an interview with the ideological problem that Soviet counter-economy nuclear retaliation would entail massacre of the working class of the United States and Western Europe, a specialist from the Disarmament Section of the USA Institute replied: " Do you think we distinguished between workers and capitalists when we destroyed German cities in 1945? " [40] Stalin's notoriously benign attitude to the looting and rapine which accompanied the Soviet advance to Berlin is no doubt still widely indulged among Russians. *Legitimate vengeance against a people*—that was the Soviet (or at least Russian) philosophy of strategic retaliation in World War Two—and still seems to be, although the form the vengeance would take is now very different.[41] American strategic thought seems almost vengeance-free by comparison, although equally prone to personify—however impersonally—" the aggressor " (singular). For the Soviets, as for the Americans, this aggressor is a queer collective being who somehow includes " the peaceful population " (to use a Soviet phrase) as well as

[38] Boris Pasternak, " A Tale of Terror," in *Let the Living Remember: Soviet War Poetry* (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976) p. 209. (One hopes the living will be able to forget this translation.)

[39] Newspaper articles of early 1945, cited in Alexander Werth, *Russia at War, 1941–1945* (Pan Books, 1964) p. 864.

[40] *Interview*, Moscow, 30 Sept. 1976. On the Red Army's frequently unauthorized acts of revenge, see Werth, op. cit. p. 863.

[41] Strategic bombing was not a Soviet practice in World War Two—" the strategic bombing force (the Long Range Air Force) was small, mainly equipped with short-range twin-engined aircraft, and used mostly for attack on facilities (such as rail junctions) which directly supported the land battle." (Geoffrey Jukes, " The Development of Soviet Strategic Thinking Since 1945," *Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence*, No. 14, 1972, pp. 11–12). " Counter-city " vengeance took the form (among others!) of burning down German factories, houses, and even whole towns. Stalin quite quickly acknowledged the folly of putting property to the torch, and stopped it. (See Werth, op. cit. pp. 865–7.) For a reference to the " justice " of nuclear retribution see Major-General K. Bochkarev, " The Question of the Sociological Aspect of the Struggle Against the Forces of Aggression and War ", *Voyennaya Mysl'*, No. 9, Sept. 1978, cited in Garthoff, op. cit. p. 120.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

militarist conspirators. In proposing to wipe out this reified villain, Soviet, like some American theory fails to note that literal nuclear aggressors (" ruling circles ") would be able to hide or otherwise escape the consequences of their deeds, whilst the " peaceful population " component of the aggressor would be not only defenceless, but—according to ideological orthodoxy in East as well as West—incapable of effectively influencing the ruling elite.

QUITE apart from these moral-ideological problems, the execution of total pre-emptive nuclear retaliation remains an absurdity from a purely strategic point of view for the USSR. It is likely to be militarily futile; it " kills the hostage "; it destroys an industrial system —or, rather, *two* industrial systems—which will be needed post-Armageddon; it may trigger utter devastation for Soviet society if that has not already occurred; and, if it has, there can be no interest (although no danger!) in massive retaliation. Essentially the same considerations apply to American strategy. Yet détente between the superpowers is usually seen as resting on deterrence by means of genocidal nuclear threats. Strange basis for a relaxation of tensions, improvement of relations and global cooperation! The best that can be said for Soviet strategy is that it has not lost sight of the fact that thermonuclear war is still *war* and not a game of chicken. But it still seems to me that until Soviet strategists learn to crawl in the mud, intellectually speaking, among the realities of nuclear combat, Soviet strategy will be a thing of little worth and considerable risk. And Lenin (one hopes) will continue to be heard murmuring in his mausoleum of strategic chatterboxes and thermonuclear fairy tales.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Soviet and Chinese Armies: their Post-Civil War Roles

Jonathan R. Adelman

IN 1979 the military rules the majority of key developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In many other countries the military possesses considerable influence in the policy-making process. As Huntington has written, "Military interventions apparently are an inseparable part of political modernization whatever the continent and whatever the country." [1] In the last 15 years a voluminous literature has explored in depth many aspects of the extended military role in the political process of developing countries.[2]

Both the Soviet Union (1921–40) and China (1950–71) were developing countries in the first two decades after the end of their civil wars. Yet, contrary to the general pattern, the Soviet army played only a relatively minor role in Party affairs and in the policy-making process. This cannot be attributed to a presumed communist pattern of army/Party relations. For the Chinese army played an important, even critical, role in Party affairs. However, while the key role of the Chinese army appeared congruent with the general pattern of armies in developing countries, sharp fluctuations in the political role of the army were seemingly inexplicable in terms of the pattern.

The literature on the role of the military in developing countries, largely focusing on poorly integrated countries, has given scant attention to communist countries undergoing revolutionary transformations of society. When it has dealt with communist armies, the literature has frequently ignored the differences between them. Thus, while Janowitz and Speier both created a "totalitarian" category of civilian-military relations, Huntington established a "communist" category.[3]

[1] Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (Yale University Press, 1968), p. 192.

[2] For a sample of this extensive literature, see: S. E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback* (Praeger, New York, 1962); Keith Hopkins, "Civil-Military Relations in Developing Countries," *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (June 1966); Morris Janowitz, *The Military in the Political Development of New Nations* (University of Chicago Press, 1964); John J. Johnson (ed.), *The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries* (Princeton University Press, 1962); Moshe Lissak, "Stages of Modernization and Patterns of Military Coups," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, Vol. 14, Nos. 1–2 (March-June 1973); A. R. Luckham, "A Comparative Typology of Civil-Military Relations," *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Winter 1971); Amos Perlmutter, "The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (April 1969); Robert Price, "A Theoretical Approach to Military Rule in New States," *World Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (April 1971); Lucian Pye, *Aspects of Political Development* (Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1966) and Edward Shils, *Political Development in the New States* (Mouton, The Hague, 1968).

[3] Morris Janowitz, pp. 3–8; Hans Speier, *War and the Social Order: Papers in Political Sociology* (G. W. Stewart, New York, 1952), p. 4 and Samuel Huntington, pp. 193–263.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ionescu designated the Soviet Union and China as "apparat control" states.[4] Doorn, lumping both countries into the stratum of "socialist and totalitarian" countries, declared that for the military "... in the communist world, in both developed and underdeveloped countries ... obedience to political authority, embodied in the Party, is complete and fixed."[5]

Furthermore, a number of explanatory factors which could be adduced from the literature—level of military technology, international political environment and level of development—also fail to explain adequately the differences between the two armies. Gordon Craig has written that, "It is perhaps an inevitable concomitant of technical progress that military influence in the direction of foreign affairs should have increased sharply in all countries since 1870."[6] Yet, although the technological capabilities of the Red Army vastly improved in the 1930s, the role of the Soviet army in the policy-making process—especially during the Great Purges—actually shrank rather than expanded. In China, the sharp fluctuations in the political influence of the army have not correlated with changes in the technology of the army.[7]

Both armies also functioned in similar international political environments and levels of development. Lasswell's "garrison state thesis" emphasized that the threats posed by the international political environment necessitated a strengthened military posture and concurrent rise in the power and influence of the army.[8] The Soviet Union, aided by memories of Allied intervention in the civil war, felt an acute sense of "capitalist encirclement" in the 1920s and the "drawing near of military menace" in the form of German fascism and Japanese militarism in the 1930s.[9] Yet, the army played a minimal role in the policy-making process. China, facing in the 1950–71 period the enmity of the United States and Taiwan, and in the 1960s the hostility of the Soviet Union, also existed in a hostile international environment. Both countries functioned at a low level of economic development, generally a precursor of a high level of military involvement in politics. Nevertheless, the Soviet army remained relatively isolated from Party affairs, even during the revolutionary transform-

[4] Ghita Ionescu, *The Politics of the European Communist States* (Praeger, New York, 1967), p. x.

[5] Jacques van Doorn, "Political Change and the Control of the Military: Some General Remarks," in his edited, *Military Profession and Military Regimes* (Mouton, The Hague, 1969), pp. 25 and 30 and his "Armed Forces and Society: Patterns and Trends," in his edited *Armed Forces and Society* (Mouton, The Hague, 1968), p. 43.

[6] Gordon Graig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640–1945* (Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. xvi-xvii.

[7] Furthermore, in a narrower sense, in China to the extent that development of a higher level of military technology represented gravitation towards the "expert" army model, it implied a temporary withdrawal from the policy-making process. It also implied a diminution of the army's role as an independent politicized actor.

[8] Harold Lasswell, "The Garrison-State Hypothesis Today," in Samuel Huntington (ed.), *Changing Patterns of Military Politics* (Free Press, New York, 1962), pp. 51–69.

[9] *50 Let Vooruzhennykh Sil SSSR* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1968), p. 194.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ation of the 1930s, while the involvement of the Chinese army in Party affairs grew greatly during the Cultural Revolution.[10]

IN this article we hypothesize that the differing natures of the civil war periods can help explain why the role of the army in Party affairs in the two post-civil war decades was far greater and more fluctuating in China than it was in the Soviet Union. During the 1921–40 period in the Soviet Union and the 1950–71 period in China, both parties pursued similar goals of governmental consolidation, economic recovery and socialist transformation of society.[11] Often neglected by scholars, the civil war periods (1918–21 in the Soviet Union and 1946–49 in China) were important formative periods for the development of the Soviet Union and China.[12] In both countries the civil wars had a major influence on the Party leadership. For the middle and lower-level militants in both parties the civil wars were the first and most important formative influence. The major instruments of government—army, secret police, trade unions, government bureaucracy, etc.—were formed and the nature of the Party was transformed.

Many key events in the two decades after the end of the civil war in the Soviet Union and China cannot be fully understood without reference to the civil wars. The Great Purges, during which the Soviet Union was dismembered by repeated charges of treason and foreign

[10] One could argue that the traditional political culture of the two countries might help to explain the differences between the two armies. The record, however, is somewhat mixed. The tsarist army, like the Red Army, was effectively subordinated to civilian authority and isolated from the decision-making process. However, unlike the Red Army, the tsarist army was a reliable instrument for crushing even popular revolts such as the 1849 Hungarian revolt and the 1905 Russian revolution. The military factor (as opposed to the military sector) was important in both tsarist Russia and Soviet Russia in the 1930s. However, this was not true for the 1920s. Parallels could also be drawn between the key role of the army in the political arena in the 1911–27 warlord period and the 1927–49 Kuomintang period and the communist period. However, the role of the communist army fluctuated to a far greater extent than the roles of the pre-communist armies in the political process. Furthermore, if we consider the pre-1911 period to be the proper framework of comparison, then we find little continuity with the communist period. As Eisenstadt has written about the pre-1911 period, " In China, though in different periods it enjoyed relatively great political significance, the army did not constitute a permanent semi-legitimate (or at least accepted) factor in the political process." (see S. N. Eisenstadt, *The Political System of Empires*, Free Press, New York, 1968, p. 172).

The mere existence of some parallels does not constitute proof of a link between the traditional and communist periods. Such seeming parallels often conceal sharp differences in the nature of the armies. Unlike traditional armies, the communist armies were highly politicized forces, in which the Party and commissars played a key role, and which served as " schools of communism." The communist officer corps was more democratized than the elite-dominated officer corps of traditional armies. Only an analysis of the civil war periods, the key links between the pre-communist and communist periods, could show how, if at all, traditional cultural patterns were transmitted.

[11] In both countries the first two decades after the end of the civil war were important periods. In the Soviet Union they covered the inter-war period. In China they began with the consolidation of power and ended with the Lin Piao Affair.

[12] In the Chinese case we formally deal only with the decisive civil war in the 1946–49 period. But, in a larger sense, we are really dealing with the effects of the entire 1927–49 period which was marked by no less than three civil wars.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conspiracies, can be clarified in terms of the experience of the Party in the civil war. At that time, the Bolsheviks were repeatedly plagued by the treasonous activities of many supposed allies (left-wing Socialist Revolutionaries, Muraviev, Grigoriev, Makhno, the Kronstadt sailors, Lundquist, etc.) and the active intervention by many Allied countries against the Bolsheviks (French sailors at Odessa, Japanese troops in Siberia, American troops in Archangel, etc.). The acute sense of "capitalist encirclement" also developed as a consequence. The radical transformation of society in the 1930s had its roots in the radical War Communism policies of the civil war. The need for extensive coercion to suppress peasant uprisings, to requisition food from the countryside and even to prevent desertion from the army during the civil war removed inhibitions about the use of force against the peasantry in the 1930s. The methods used to repress peasant revolts in the 1930s—Chekist terror, armed detachments of workers and mobilization of communists and reliable units—bore striking resemblance to the methods used in the civil war.[13]

The civil war period (especially taken in the broader 1927–50 time frame) was equally formative in China. The Maoist concept of "mass line" had its origins in this period. During this formative era the communists had to gain the active support of the peasantry or face extinction. The Maoist belief in voluntarism stemmed from the simple fact that over a lengthy period of time and against tremendous obstacles the communists had persevered and triumphed. The radical militant and military-style egalitarianism so evident in the Great Leap Forward had its origins in the period of over a decade spent by the Party leadership in Yenan. The entire concept of a revolutionary transformation from below, which was a prominent feature of the Cultural Revolution, also had deep roots in this period.

WE will begin by comparing relations between the army and the Party (or the army and the dominant faction) in the Soviet Union and China in the first two decades following the civil wars. Then we will make a detailed comparative analysis of the two armies in their respective civil wars. Finally, we will show that the civil war periods were remarkably formative in determining the roles of the armies in the two decades after their conclusion.

Formal Indicators of Power

A comparative analysis of formal indicators of army power—representation in the Politburo and Central Committee and participation

[13] One could even argue that the entire programme of collectivization had its origins in the civil war period. The numerous peasant uprisings and mass desertion of peasants from the Red Army in the civil war convinced the Bolsheviks, already anti-peasant in orientation, of the basic incompatibility of the peasantry and socialism. As Stalin asserted in 1919, "I must say that those elements—non-proletarian elements—which constitute the majority of our army—the peasantry—will not voluntarily fight for socialism." See I. V. Stalin, *Sochineniya* (Gosizdat, Moscow, 1950), Vol. 4, p. 250.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the Party congresses—illuminates the sharp differences in the role of the armies in the Soviet Union (1921–40) and China (1950–71). Table 1 shows the far greater army representation in the Chinese Politburo than in the Soviet Politburo. Despite remarkable changes in the technology and officer corps of the Red Army, the War Commissar remained the only army representative in the Soviet Politburo throughout the 1921–40 period. By contrast, army representation among the full and alternate members of the Chinese Politburo surged from one member in 1950 (9 per cent) to six members in 1956 (27 per cent) and twelve members in 1969 (48 per cent) and then sharply declined after the Lin Piao Affair to six members in late 1971 (31 per cent).

There were also sharp differences in the nature of army representation. Successive Soviet army representatives—War Commissars

TABLE 1

*Army Representation in the Russian Communist Party Politburo (1921–40) and the Chinese Communist Party Politburo (1950–71)—Full and Alternate Members**

Congress	Russia	Congress	China
1921 (10)	13% (1 out of 8)	1950 (7) †	9% (1 out of 11)
1922 (11)	10% (1 out of 10)	1953	17% (2 out of 12)
1923 (12)	9% (1 out of 11)	1955	23% (3 out of 13)
1924 (13)	15% (2 out of 13)	1956 (8)	27% (6 out of 23)
1925 (14)	7% (1 out of 14)	1958	23% (6 out of 26)
1927 (15)	6% (1 out of 17)	1965	22% (5 out of 23)
1930 (16)	7% (1 out of 15)	1969 (9)	48% (12 out of 25)
1934 (17)	7% (1 out of 15)	1971 ‡	37% (7 out of 19)
1939 (18)	9% (1 out of 11)		

* An army representative is defined as a man who served in a full-time position (command, staff, administration, political work) in the army at the time that the Politburo was selected.

† The seventh Party congress was held in 1945.

‡ The figure is for the period after the demise of Lin Piao and his five Politburo associates late in 1971.

Sources: For the Russian data, see the following records of the congresses. For the 10th Party congress, see *Desyatyi S"ezd RKP(B), 8–18 Marta, 1921, Stenograficheskii Otchet.* For the 11th Party congress, see *Odinnadtsatyi S"ezd RKP(B), 27 Marta-2 Aprel', 1922, Stenograficheskii Otchet.* For the 12th Party congress, see *Dvenadtsatyi S"ezd RKP(B), 17–25 Aprelya, 1923, Stenograficheskii Otchet.* For the 13th Party congress, see *Trinadtsatyi S"ezd RKP(B) Mai, 1924, Stenograficheskii Otchet.* For the 14th Party congress see *XIV S"ezd VKP(B), 18–31 Dekabrya, 1925, Stenograficheskii Otchet.* For the 15th Party congress, see *Pyatnadtsatyi S"ezd VKP(B), Dekabrya, 1927, Stenograficheskii Otchet.* For the 16th Party congress, see *XVI S"ezd VKP(B), 1930, Stenograficheskii Otchet.* For the 17th Party congress, see *KPSS, XVII S"ezd, 26 Yanvarya–10 Fevralya, 1934, Stenograficheskii Otchet.* For the 18th Party congress, see *KPSS, XVIII S"ezd, 10–21 Marta, 1939, Stenograficheskii Otchet.*

For the Chinese data, see the following sources: *Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China*, Vol. 2; *Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China; Peking Review* No. 18 (30 Apr. 1969); and Donald Klein and Anne Clark, *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism 1921–1965.*

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Trotsky (1921–25), Frunze (1924–25) and Voroshilov (1925–40)—possessed neither professional military training nor military experience before the civil war. All three men were professional revolutionaries, who served as key Party representatives in the army. Despite the existence of a number of talented Party career commanders, such as Yakir and Tukhachevsky, in the 1921–40 period not a single career soldier sat in the Politburo.[14] By contrast, while only one of eight Soviet Marshals was chosen for the Politburo in the 1921–40 period, all 10 of the Chinese Marshals were selected for the Politburo in the 1950–71 period. Nearly all of the Chinese Marshals, career soldiers despite their revolutionary past, occupied key command and staff posts in the army.

The striking separation of army and Party elites in the Soviet Union was seen in the fact that not a single civilian Politburo member in the 1921–40 period had served as an officer in the civil war! The minority of civilian Politburo members who had served in the army during the civil war—among whom were Stalin, Kirov and Kuibyshev—had been commissars and Party representatives on various revolutionary military committees. But, they were in the army, not of it. As soon as the civil war came to a close, they moved on to other Party assignments. By contrast, army and Party elites were so close in China that Defence Minister Lin Piao could be Mao's designated successor in the 1966–71 period.

Table 2 shows a pattern of Central Committee representation similar to that of Politburo representation. Soviet army representation on the Central Committees was so minimal that it never exceeded 10 per cent of all seats and dipped as low as 3 per cent in 1927. By sharp contrast, Chinese army representation was very substantial. It fluctuated from 51 per cent in 1950 to 30 per cent in 1956 to 46 per cent in 1969. During the 1930s, as a whole generation of Soviet military professionals (including all eight Marshals) joined the Central Committee, Soviet army represention rose modestly from 5 per cent in 1930 to 10 per cent in 1939.

Finally, the Party congresses also reflected the striking isolation of the Soviety army elite from the Party elite and the close interaction of the Chinese army and Party elites. While Soviet army men gave only 0–5 per cent of all speeches made at the Party congresses in the 1921–40 period, Chinese army leaders gave 14 per cent and 38 per cent of the published speeches at the eighth and ninth Party congresses in 1956 and 1969. During the 1920s the isolation of the Soviet army leadership was so pronounced that army men made but 0–2 per cent of all speeches made at four congresses which we analysed. Furthermore, at these four congresses, four of the five Marshals named in 1935 did not speak even once, while the remain-

[14] With the brief exception of Marshal Zhukov in 1957, no career officer ever belonged to the Politburo except for Defence Minister Grechko in the 1973–76 period.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing Marshal, War Commissar Voroshilov, made a single speech. The very existence of these key military leaders was ignored. At these four congresses the names of future Marshals Blyukher and Yegorov were not mentioned even once. The name of Marshal Tukhachevsky merited one lone passing reference with regard to the 1920 battle for Warsaw. Only Marshals Budenny and Voroshilov, Stalin's supporters in the 1920s, received frequent mention. Although participation by key Red Army leaders rose markedly in the congresses held in the 1930s, it still remained at a low level. Furthermore, the records of all congresses surveyed in the 1922–39 period revealed that, with the exception of ritualistic remarks, military speakers totally avoided non-military topics.[15]

TABLE 2

*Army Representation in the Russian Communist Party Central Committee (1921–40) and the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee (1950–71)—Full and Alternate Members**

Congress	Russia	Congress	China
1921 (10)	10% (4 out of 40)	1950 (7)†	51% (39 out of 77)
1922 (11)	7% (3 out of 46)		
1923 (12)	5% (3 out of 57)		
1924 (13)	5% (4 out of 87)		
1925 (14)	4% (4 out of 106)	1956 (8)	30% (48 out of 163)
1927 (15)	3% (4 out of 121)		
1930 (16)	5% (7 out of 138)		
1934 (17)	8% (11 out of 139)		
1939 (18)	10% (14 out of 139)	1969 (9)	46% (132 out of 279)

* An army representative is defined as a man who served in a full-time position (command, staff, administration, political work) in the army at the time that the Central Committee was selected.

† The seventh Party congress was held in 1945.

Sources: The sources are the same as for Table 1.

However, in China army leaders played prominent roles in the congresses held in 1956 and 1969. At the eighth Party congress in 1956, Marshal Chu Teh and Marshal P'eng Teh-huai delivered the fifth and sixth speeches. Chu Teh spoke broadly on non-military problems. At the ninth Party congress in 1969, Defence Minister Lin Piao, Mao's designated successor, delivered the principal speech.

These formal indicators have demonstrated that the Chinese army played a far greater role in Party affairs than did the Soviet army. They have also shown that in the two decades after the civil wars Soviet army/Party relations were in a relatively rigid mould, while Chinese army/Party relations fluctuated to a far greater extent.

[15] See the records of the Party congresses listed in Table 1.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Other Indicators of Power

Non-formal indicators of power show a similar pattern. At no point did the Soviet army exercise any role of political leadership in society. The attempts by military leaders to influence non-military matters were not notably successful. In 1927 Yakir, Putna and other officers vainly signed some form of confidential defence of the opposition.[16] Also in 1927 future Marshals Tukhachevsky and Blyukher joined other commanders in unsuccessfully opposing Stalinist policy in China.[17] Although roughly three-quarters of the army's representatives on the Central Committee joined a civilian Party majority in opposing further purges at an August 1936 Central Committee plenum, the army's officer corps was soon decimated by massive purges.[18]

Only in the 1930s, in the aftermath of the severe crisis in the countryside following the drive for collectivization and dekulakization, did the army leaders obtain concessions in the political arena. In 1933 future Marshal Blyukher obtained a partial restoration of NEP in the Far East on the grounds of military necessity. At the same time commanders Yakir and Dubovoy, together with several key Party *obkom* secretaries, obtained a halt in bread shipments from the famine-stricken Ukraine. These concessions were, however, exceptional. For as Stalin (according to Voroshilov) commented at the time about the commanders, "They are not cooperating. The military men must be concerned with their own affairs and not talk about that which does not concern them."[19]

The Soviet army leaders enjoyed considerably greater success in military-related matters. In 1930, for example, commanders Yakir and Dubovoy obtained the release and rehabilitation of a number of *voenspets* (ex-tsarist officers) accused of conspiring to annihilate the leadership of the Ukrainian army.[20] Especially in the 1930s, the rising foreign threat, tremendous growth in the size and armaments of the army and creation of a large military-industrial complex greatly enhanced the power of military leaders in military-related matters. It also provided army leaders such as Voroshilov with frequent, even daily contact with Stalin. Although the power of the military sector remained limited in non-military areas, the importance of the military factor grew dramatically in the 1930s. Marshal Meretskov could later write in his autobiography, "Every major task in industry and agriculture and in the field of Party, Government or social activity was tackled from the point of view of its impact on the Soviet Union's

[16] Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Unarmed: Trotsky 1921–1929* (Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 350.

[17] A. Neuberg, *Armed Insurrection* (NLB, London, 1970), p. 20.

[18] John Erickson, *The Soviet High Command* (Macmillan, London, 1962), p. 426.

[19] *Komandarm Yakir: Vospominaniya Druzei i Soratnikov* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1963), p. 112.

[20] Ibid. pp. 94, 109–11 and P. Babenko, *I. E. Yakir* (Politizdat, Moscow, 1964), p. 75.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

defence capacity, the international situation, or the strength of the Red Army." [21]

Finally, the minimal role of the army in Party affairs was reflected in the state of the Party stratum in the army, especially in the officer corps. In 1921 only 20 per cent of all officers belonged to the Party. By 1930 the communist stratum reached approximately one-half of the officer corps and stabilized at about two-thirds during the 1930s.[22] Besides the one-third of the officer corps which never joined the Party, many officers who belonged to the Party (such as the *voenspets*) were actually apolitical. Among the minority of commanders involved in political affairs, only a small but prominent number were Stalinists. Consisting largely of civil war associates of Stalin at Tsaritsyn and in the First Cavalry Army, the Stalinist faction, including Budenny, Shchadenko and Voroshilov, was notably unsympathetic towards modern mechanized warfare. However, its small size was attested to by the vote of three-quarters of the army representatives at the August 1936 Central Committee plenum against a Stalinist plan to extend the purges. Most key officers voting against Stalin were loosely grouped around Marshal Tukhachevsky. This faction included many heroes of the civil war (such as Yakir and Uborevich) in which Stalin played a small role, and was noted for its positive view of modern mechanized warfare. It did not rule out political action. Thus, while most officers were apolitical, a large segment of politically oriented commanders stood somewhat apart from the dominant Stalinist faction in the 1921–37 period.

The Soviet army ranks were even more isolated from Party affairs. The Soviet army's Party stratum, fluctuating in the 7–24 per cent range in the 1921–40 period, dipped to only 9·8 per cent in 1938.[23] Given the overwhelming dominance of army Party cells by such elements as commanders, political commissars and officer-cadets, only 1–4 per cent of all soldiers belonged to the Party in the 1921–40 period.[24] So apolitical were the thin Red Army Party ranks that even during the campaigns against Trotskyism and right-wing deviationism

[21] K. A. Meretskov, *Na Sluzhbe Narody: Stranitsi Vospominanii* (Politizdat, Moscow, 1964), p. 169.

[22] See Table 8 in my doctoral dissertation, "The Revolutionary Armies: A Comparison of the Russian and Chinese Communist Armies," Columbia University doctoral dissertation, 1976, pp. 109–10.

[23] These figures are condensed from Table 7 of my unpublished doctoral dissertation. Party membership stood at 7 per cent in 1921, 24·2 per cent in 1934 and 9·8 per cent in 1938. See K. E. Voroshilov, *Stat'i i Rechi* (Partizdat, Moscow, 1937), p. 574, *Istoriya Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny Sovetskogo Soyuza* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1960), Vol. 1, p. 98 and Yuri Petrov, *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo v Sovetskoi Armii i Flote (1918–1961)* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1964), pp. 242 and 321.

[24] As many as 85 per cent of the Party members in the army consisted of commissars, political workers, commanders, administrators and students in the military academies and schools. See Politicheskoe Upravlenie RKKA, *1918–1928 Let Krasnoi Armii-Albom Diagram* (Voennyi Vestnik, Moscow, 1928), p. 48.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a miniscule 0·19 per cent of the ranks were purged, far less than in civilian Party ranks.[25]

IN contrast, the Chinese army played a key, but oscillating, role not only in military affairs but also in civilian Party affairs in the 1950–71 period. However, its record of intervention in Party affairs was marked by a number of failures as well as some successes. In the period 1950–54, when the military ruled in the provinces, the army exercised important governmental and even Party functions below the central level. At the Lushan plenum in 1959 Defence Minister P'eng Teh-huai and Chief-of-Staff Huang K'o-cheng, together with some civilian Party allies, launched a blistering attack on the Great Leap Forward and other Maoist policies. The attack, however, was unsuccessful and both army leaders were purged. During the 1960s the power of the army, and especially that of the dominant army faction under the aegis of Defence Minister Lin Piao, grew tremendously. In the extended "Learn From the PLA" campaign the army was frequently evoked as a model for society. By the time of the Cultural Revolution, Defence Minister Lin Piao had already become Mao's designated successor.

As the chaos of the Cultural Revolution mounted and the Party and governmental institutions disintegrated below the central level, the army emerged as a major Maoist power base and key force in maintaining order. Especially below the central level, the army exercised decisive political influence.[26] The People's Liberation Army was instrumental in setting up the new revolutionary committees, which temporarily ruled China at the provincial level at the end of the Cultural Revolution. Even by the end of 1968 three-quarters of the chairmen and one-half of the members of the standing committees of these revolutionary committees in the 29 administrative areas of China were army men.[27] At the ninth Party congress in 1969 army men occupied 12 of 25 Politburo seats while Defence Minister Lin Piao, Mao's designated successor, gave the principal address. In words which would have been considered heretical in the Soviet Union, a 1969 Chinese editorial ignored the role of the Party and stressed the centrality of the army's political role by declaring,

> Military power is the heart of state power. The army as the main factor in the dictatorship of the proletariat is the mighty pillar

[25] D. A. Voropaev and A. M. Iovlev, *Bor'ba KPSS Za Sozdanie Voennykh Kadrov* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1960), p. 109.

[26] In March, 1967, for example, a typical editorial declaimed,

> Anyone who opposes the People's Liberation Army built personally by Chairman Mao is opposing our great leader Chairman Mao. Whoever opposes the People's Liberation Army we will resolutely smash so that they shall never rise again . . . . We warmly hail and salute the glorious great Chinese People's Liberation Army!

See *Survey of China Mainland Press* (S.C.M.P.) No. 3891, 3 Mar. 1967, p. 14.

[27] Jurgen Domes, "Party Politics and the Cultural Revolution," in Frank Trager and William Henderson (eds.), *Communist China 1949–1969: A Twenty Year Appraisal* (New York University Press, 1970), p. 90.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> of the dictatorship. In the acute and complicated struggle between the bourgeoisie . . . and the proletariat . . . the army is the most important factor. Provided the army does not change colour and is in the hands of genuine Marxists, the proletariat is not afraid of the emergence of revisionism in other fields and rebellion by the bourgeoisie.[28]

During the 1969–71 period, the army, instrumental in the creation of new provincial Party committees, dominated them.

The Lin Piao Affair in 1971 illustrated the great difficulty in dislodging the army from its extensive involvement in political affairs. In his speech at the 10th Party congress, Chou En-lai recounted the protracted nature of the conflict which lasted from 1969 to 1971. He labelled it the 10th major struggle in Chinese communist history.[29] Given the fact that five key army Politburo members and numerous other army and Party leaders were affiliated with the Lin Piao faction, the struggle was fierce. Only through the mobilization of civilian Party and government and some military leaders was Lin Piao ultimately defeated. The power of the army declined sharply in the aftermath of the mysterious deaths of Lin Piao and his Politburo allies and the purge of his followers. However, the lack of an institutionalized army/Party relationship was reflected graphically in the fact that the key posts of Defence Minister, Chief-of-Staff and Political Commissar remained unfilled from 1971 until 1975! And, even then, within a year, the Defence Minister (Yeh Chien-ying) and the Chief-of-Staff (Teng Hsiao-p'ing) left their posts. In short, we have seen that army/Party relations were much more fluid and the army played a far greater role in Party affairs in China than in the Soviet Union.

Unlike the Soviet officers, nearly all Chinese officers not only joined the Party but also actively participated in political affairs. Especially at the elite level, nearly all officers were old revolutionaries. No large and identifiable element in the Chinese officer corps stood apart from the dominant Party stratum. Indeed, both during the 1950–54 period of military rule in the provinces and the 1967–71 period of the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath, army commanders played an important role in Party and governmental affairs, especially below the central level. This was also reflected in the large and active Party stratum in the ranks. While 30–40 per cent of the ranks belonged to the Party in the 1950s, the figure probably increased even further in the 1960s under the leadership of Defence Minister Lin Piao.[30]

Army/Party differences also were reflected in different societal roles for the two armies. Both armies pursued the political, educational

[28] *S.C.M.P.* No. 3891, 3 Mar. 1967, p. 14.

[29] *Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China* (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1973), pp. 10–15.

[30] Davis Bobrow, "The Political and Economic Role of the Military in the Chinese Communist Movement," (MIT doctoral dissertation, 1962), pp. 216, 714–16.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and technical training of soldiers in the barracks. However, political differences between the armies are reflected in the fact that the Soviet army performed far more minimal functions in society outside the barracks than did the Chinese army. The Soviet army engaged in little economic production, did not serve as a role model for society and exercised no political leadership in society. By contrast, the Chinese army, especially during the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, participated extensively in economic production.[31] During the "Everyone a Soldier" campaign of the Great Leap Forward and in the "Learn From the PLA" campaign carried out before and during the Cultural Revolution, the PLA served as role model for society. During the 1950–54 period of military rule and the 1966–71 period of the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath, the military performed major political leadership functions in society, often in lieu of Party and governmental organs in the provinces.

Purges

These army/Party differences were also reflected in the different nature of purges in the two countries. The principal similarity between Soviet and Chinese army purges was that both parties ultimately managed to contain possible army challenges to Party control. The differences were far greater. Interestingly, the Soviet army was virtually exempt from most of the purges which recurrently swept the Party from 1921 to 1940. Thus, while in 1921 25 per cent and in 1933 17 per cent of all communists were purged, only 10 per cent and 4·3 per cent respectively of all army communists were purged. A similar pattern occurred in 1929 and in 1934.[32] The two major purges—the 1924–26 and 1937–41 purges—were, by contrast, deep and decisive in moulding and reaffirming the army's rigid non-involvement in politics. Their initial impetus possibly may have come from defensive political moves made by army communists against the dominant Stalinist faction in the Party. In both cases army resistance to the decisive purges was minimal or non-existent.

Although the Party was increasingly dominated by the Stalinist faction in the early 1920s, power in the army remained at least

[31] During the period of the Great Leap Forward and its aftermath, the PLA engaged in 59,000,000 days of production in 1958, 44,000,000 days in 1959 and 46,000,000 days in 1960 (see *S.C.M.P.* No. 1937, 20 Jan. 1959, p. 20, *S.C.M.P.* No. 2174, 12 Jan. 1960, p. 13 and *S.C.M.P.* No. 2430, 2 Feb. 1961, p. 2). During the Cultural Revolution army production reached heights not achieved since the Great Leap Forward. See *S.C.M.P.* No. 4092, 4 Jan. 1968, p. 28, *S.C.M.P.* No. 4361, 20 Feb. 1969, p. 15, *S.C.M.P.* No. No. 4574, 12 Jan. 1970, pp. 108–10 and *S.C.M.P.* No. 5075, 14 Feb. 1972, p. 69.

[32] While in 1929 11·7 per cent and in 1934 25 per cent of all communists were purged, only 3·5 per cent–5·0 per cent and "far less" respectively of all army communists were purged. See Yuri Petrov, *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo v Sovetskoi Armii i Flote (1918–1961)* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1964), pp. 150, 229–30, 283–84, *KPSS i Stroitel'stvo Vooruzhennykh Sily SSSR (1918–Juin, 1941)* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1959), p. 194 and *KPSS, XVII S"ezd, 26 Yanvarya–10 Fevralya, 1934, Stenograficheskii Otchet* (Partizdat, Moscow, 1934), p. 232.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nominally in the hands of a loose Trotskyite faction. This faction included War Commissar Trotsky, Moscow garrison commander Muralov and Political Administration head Antonov-Ovseenko. While Trotsky acknowledged the apolitical nature of the army by refusing to involve the army in his struggle for power, Antonov-Ovseenko did take the struggle into the army. Although "factional struggle in the army took an extremely sharp form," [33] especially in Moscow, the Stalinists easily defeated the Trotskyites and purged them from the army. In their place came Stalinist stalwarts such as Voroshilov, War Commissar from 1925 until 1940. While the Political Administration was sharply reduced in size, stripped of its power and subordinated directly to the Central Committee, Special Sections (00) of the secret police were established within the army.

Similarly, after the majority of army representatives at the August 1936 Central Committee plenum had opposed extension of the purges, the Stalinist faction launched the massive purges within the army. The toll included three of the five Marshals, 14 of 16 Class One and Two Army Commanders, all eight Admirals, 60 of the 67 corps commanders and between 15,000 and 35,000 officers.[34] The massive purges destroyed any possible resurgence of army political involvement and ended the possible use of the army as a check on Stalinism. The army's positive involvement in political struggles had long ago ceased. However, the degree of independence and autonomy in military affairs, the self-legitimation and self-confidence of key officers founded on their civil war exploits were crushed by the Great Purges.[35] The removal of almost an entire generation of civil war leaders allowed the rise of the surviving Stalinists (such as Budenny, Timoshenko and Kulik) to positions of great power and the rapid promotion of a new generation of younger officers to key positions.

In contrast to the thorough and decisive purges in the Soviet army, most army purges in China were partial and indecisive in institutionalizing army/Party relations. Furthermore, army political power actually grew in the aftermath of the 1959 (P'eng Teh-huai), 1965 (Lo Jui-ching), 1967 (Ho Lung) and 1968 (Yang Cheng-wu) purges. The softness of most purges was seen in the fact that Defence Minister

[33] Yuri Petrov, *Stroitel'stvo Politorganov, Partiinykh i Komsomolskikh Organizatsii Armii i Flota (1918–1968)* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1971), p. 143. Although soundly defeated elsewhere, the Trotskyites won the support of the Party organization of the staff of the Moscow Military District, one-third of the party cells of the Moscow garrison and a majority of the Moscow army student cells (p. 162).

[34] While Erickson has estimated that a minimum of 15,000 officers (from a total of 75,000 officers) were purged, Conquest and Krivitsky have placed the number as high as possibly 35,000 officers. See John Erickson, op. cit. p. 406, Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror* (Macmillan, New York, 1968), p. 485 and Walter Krivitsky, *In Stalin's Secret Service* (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1939), p. 232.

[35] As Weissberg has written about the popularity of Soviet military leaders, "For us they were heroes of the revolution and the civil war and their personal integrity was beyond all question." See Alexander Weissberg, *The Accused* (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1951), p. 372.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

P'eng Teh-huai, purged in 1959, actually retained his Politburo seat for several years thereafter.[36] None of these four purges involved the use of physical violence. The purges were often so limited in scope that in 1959, 1965 and 1968 they in each case involved the removal of less than five officers and commissars, albeit important ones, among them, the Chiefs-of-Staff. The 1971 purge of the Lin Piao faction, which presaged a sharp reduction in army power in Party affairs, differed sharply from the other purges. Not only did Defence Minister Lin Piao and five other army Politburo colleagues die under mysterious circumstances in an airplane crash in Mongolia, but nearly 100 central military leaders, many air force officers and perhaps as many as 35 provincial-level Party secretaries were purged.[37] However, even this hard, widespread and probably violent purge failed to institutionalize army/Party relations. The key posts of Defence Minister, Chief-of-Staff and head of the General Political Department remained vacant until 1975. However, the ability of civilian Party leaders, together with some military leaders, to withstand and destroy a powerful challenge mounted by such key army leaders as the Defence Minister, Air Force Commander, Navy Commissar and Chief-of-Staff, showed the limits of army influence in the policy-making process.[38]

Party Controls

The nature of party controls over the army reflected significant similarities and differences in army/Party relations between the Soviet Union and China. The high frequency of coups in developing countries attests to the difficulty of establishing firm civilian control over the army. Furthermore, in communist countries, the possession of instruments of violence by the army potentially threatens not only the continuation of civilian party rule but also the claim of the party (or its dominant faction) to hegemony in the decision-making process. This is particularly troublesome during the prolonged and difficult revolutionary transformation of society. In the Soviet Union the fear of Bonapartism and memory of the Kronstadt revolt and in China the memories of the warlord period (1911–27) and the militarist Chiang Kai-shek reinforced the importance of controlling the military. Both parties devoted considerable effort to this end. Both parties relied on many similar methods of control—party stratum in the army, use of commissars, party successes in societal transformation, relative

[36] Union Research Institute, *The Case of P'eng Teh-huai* (URI, Kowloon, Hong Kong, 1968), p. 44.

[37] Philip Bridgham, "The Fall of Lin Piao," *China Quarterly* No. 55 (July/September, 1973), pp. 442–43.

[38] These army/Party differences also undoubtedly reflected the differing nature of Soviet policy-making under Stalin and Chinese policy-making under Mao. The greater rigidity of the Soviet army/Party relationship partly reflected the dominance of Stalin through most of the 1921–40 period.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

congruence of army and societal models of development and the technological improvement of the army.[39]

However, sharp differences in the nature of party controls over the two armies belied the concept of a unitary communist pattern. In the Soviet Union the Stalinist faction heavily relied, as elsewhere, on coercion and on the renewal of the army, especially of the officer corps. While commissars were set against commanders, a pervasive secret police network in the army created a fear of arrest which limited any possible anti-Party acts.[40] Large units of independent, handpicked secret police troops, replete with tanks and airplanes, formed a potent counterforce to any independent army action.[41] Coercion, which reached its peak during the massive purges of the officer corps in the Great Purges, played a key role in subordinating the army to the Stalin faction. The Great Purges eliminated large numbers of commanders who did not owe their positions to Stalin. The great expansion of the army and officer corps in the 1930s combined with the purges allowed the creation of a new Stalinist officer corps. The great stress on peasant and proletarian origins soon filled the officer corps with men likely to be extremely grateful to, and yet fearful of, Stalin who had been responsible for their great career advancement. The transformation of the officer corps in the 1930s into an elite, privileged stratum helped ensure the loyalty of officers to the Party.

The Chinese Communist Party, however, neither relied extensively on physical coercion nor renewed or even expanded the officer corps in the 1950–71 period. It did not rely heavily on independent security troops to counterbalance the army.[42] Unlike the Russians, the Chinese relied to a much greater extent on the normative commitment of top army leaders, all of whom were old revolutionaries. The close personal and revolutionary ties of army and Party leaders played an important role. Further unlike the Soviet Party, the Chinese Party could rely on the existence of a large Party stratum in the army and an interlocking system of regional and Party secretaries and army commissars. Only during the 1965–71 period, when the army emerged as a major political agent in its own right and the Party disintegrated and was rebuilt, did these controls fail to work properly.

[39] Army leaders were grateful for the substantial improvements in the armaments of their armies. Marshal Blyukher even stated at the 17th Party congress in 1934, "Our tanks and our aviation—are the children of our first five-year plan." See *KPSS, XVII S"ezd, 26 Yanvarya–10 Fevralya, 1934, Stenograficheskii Otchet* (Partizdat, Moscow, 1934), p. 630.

[40] See Simon Wolin and Robert Slusser (eds.), *The Soviet Secret Police* (Praeger, New York, 1957), pp. 8, 88.

[41] These troops performed internal security and border defence duties. While Wollenberg has suggested a figure of 250,000 men, others such as Keefe have claimed that by the early 1930s secret police troops numbered 750,000 men. See Erich Wollenberg, *The Red Army* (Secker and Warburg, London, 1959), p. 213 and Eugene Keefe *et. al.*, *Area Handbook for the Soviet Union* (Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1971), pp. 143, 583.

[42] During 1950–58 and 1967–71 the army even subsumed the security troops directly under its own command.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Civil Wars

In order to understand the origins of these sharp army/Party differences, we turn to a comparative analysis of the state of the armies in their civil wars. It is our thesis that the civil wars were the most important formative influence on the development of army/Party relations in the Soviet Union and China in the two decades after the end of the civil wars. The Russian civil war (1918–21) was marked by repeated crises in which various White enemies (such as Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich and Wrangel) seemed to threaten the very existence of the Bolshevik regime. At the crucial moments the Bolsheviks concentrated sufficient quantities of such key and scarce resources as reliable army units, talented commanders, communists and military supplies in order to repel and then crush the key enemy thrusts. But, the weakness and unreliability of the army had major consequences for the role of the army in the post-civil war period.

Formed only in 1918 at the beginning of the civil war, the Red Army was badly hampered by the lack of a gestation period before the civil war. Although 80 to 85 per cent of the army consisted of peasants in the civil war, the army was crippled by the limited appeal of the Party to the peasants.[43] The urban-oriented Bolsheviks possessed few peasant members. Their food requisition squads, radical social experimentation, anti-religious propaganda and action, and the prominence of Jews in the Party leadership (Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Sverdlov, Radek, Sokolnikov, etc.) all alienated the peasants. The peasants ultimately supported the Bolsheviks mainly out of fear of monarchist and landlord restoration and White barbarism. The peasants manifested their recurring disaffection with the Bolsheviks through mass desertion. Soviet historian Olikov has acknowledged an "enormous" percentage of deserters in 1918 and asserted that "The ranks of the army, in the usual meaning of the word, faded away."[44] In 1919 and 1920 a phenomenal 2·85 million deserters were either apprehended in raids or appeared voluntarily under an amnesty. Many other deserters successfully evaded re-entry into the Red Army.[45] This peasant antipathy combined with the small urban proletarian base of the revolution to limit the key Party stratum to no more than 5 per cent of the army during the civil war.[46]

The Party also sorely felt the lack of a gestation period in the creation of the officer corps. The Party lacked almost any members

[43] Yu. Korablev, *V. I. Lenin i Sozdanie Krasnoi Armii* (Nauka, Moscow, 1970), p. 425.
[44] S. Olikov, *Dezertirstvo v Krasnoi Armii i Bor'ba s nim* (Voennoi Tipografii Upravlenie, Moscow, 1926), pp. 30–31.
[45] A. S. Bubnov, S. S. Kamenev, M. N. Tukhachevsky, R. P. Eidemann (eds.), *Grazhdanskaya Voina 1918–1921* (Gosizdat, Moscow, 1930), Vol. 2, p. 83.
[46] The Red Army was 5 per cent communist in December 1918, 5·1 per cent communist in January 1920 and 4·7 communist in January 1921. See *Direktivi Glavnogo Kommandovaniya Krasnoi Armii (1917–1920)* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1969), p. 139 and A. S. Bubnov *et al.*, *Grazhdanskaya Voina 1918–1921* (Gosizdat, Moscow, 1930), Vol, 2, pp. 87, 97.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who had served before the civil war as officers or even as soldiers. As Gusev later stated, the Party and proletarian strata "could put forth only a tiny number of experts in military matters."[47] Forced to create a large officer corps to direct a multimillion man army in the civil war, the Party needed to rely on such diverse and unreliable elements as *voenspets,* atamans, partisans and non-Bolshevik radicals.

So alien was the army elite from the Party elite that not a single one of the leading army officers in the Red Army belonged either to the Politburo or to the Central Committee during the civil war.[48] Indeed, the two most important officers in the Red Army in 1921—Commander-in-Chief Kamenev and Chief-of-Staff Lebedev—did not even belong to the Party. Nor did the great majority of officers (90 per cent in 1920) belong to the Party.[49] The small stratum of army representatives in the Party's Central Committee in 1921 (10 per cent of the total) consisted entirely of old professional revolutionaries (Trotsky, Frunze, Voroshilov and Gusev), who were not career soldiers, and owed their primary loyalty to the Party and not the army.

The frequently treasonous and unreliable conduct of many officers posed a serious threat to the functioning of the Red Army in the civil war. Although the 48,400 *voenspets* played a key role in the civil war, Lenin, in March 1920, also felt impelled to declare that, "Thousands of former officers, generals and colonels, betrayed and sold us, and thousands of Red Army men perished as a result, that you know."[50] Frequent revolts by atamans such as Grigoriev, Mironov and Golubov posed a real threat to the army. The unreliability of the partisans drove Lenin to such despair that in August 1919 he declaimed: "Fear like the plague, the unruly guerrilla spirit, the arbitrary actions of isolated detachments and disobedience to central authority for it spells doom as the Urals, Siberia and the Ukraine have demonstrated."[51] Similarly, serious revolts by such non-Bolshevik radical allies as Muraviev (left-wing Socialist-Revolutionary), Makhno (anarchist) and the Kronstadt rebels troubled the Red Army. The 1918 revolt of Muraviev, commander of the Eastern Front, in Lenin's words "cost the lives of tens of thousands of workers and peasants," for "he opened up almost the entire front to the enemy and caused us a number of reverses."[52] By 1921, the Red Army officer corps, in which 43 per cent of all officers possessed no military education at all,[53] was so

[47] S. I. Gusev, *Grazhdanskaya Voina i Krasnaya Armiya* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1958), p. 97.

[48] These key officers included the eight future Marshals named in 1935 and 1940, the Commander-in-Chief, Chief-of-Staff, Air Force Commander and Navy Commander in 1921.

[49] Yuri Petrov, *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo v Sovetskoi Armii i Flote (1918–1920)* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1964), p. 179.

[50] V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniya,* 4th ed. (Gosizdat, Moscow, 1950), Vol. 30, p. 403.

[51] Ibid. Vol. 29, p. 512.

[52] Ibid. Vol. 29, p. 62.

[53] Lev Trotsky, *Kak Vooruzhalas' Revolyutsiya* (Vyshii Voennyi Redaktsionnyi Soviet, Moscow, 1924), Vol. 3, part 2, p. 77.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

weak that Gusev proclaimed: "The command staff of the Red Army is the weakest of any army."[54]

Hindered by desertion in the ranks and treason in the officer corps, the Red Army lurched ineffectually from crisis to crisis. As Lenin conceded in October 1921, " . . . on each occasion—on the Kolchak front, on the Denikin front, on the Yudenich front, on the Polish front and on the Wrangel front— . . . we had been badly battered (and sometimes more than once)."[55] Fortunately for the Bolsheviks the Whites were even weaker, more disorganized and ineffective. At key moments the Bolsheviks mobilized enough men and material for victory.

The Denikin campaign was typical of many civil war campaigns. Although after considerable mobilization the Red Army by July 1919 actually outnumbered Denikin's force in manpower (171,600: 151,500) and possessed more military firepower, the Red Army was repeatedly defeated by Denikin. In the spring, summer and early autumn of 1919 Denikin's forces seized the Crimea, Kherson, Kharkov, Odessa, Kiev and Tsaritsyn. His forces reached Orel, 250 miles from Moscow, by the end of the campaign.[56] Footman has characterized the Red Army in the south as an "ineffectual and demoralized" force which "seemed to be disintegrating."[57] Only after the mobilization of 10,000 Komsomolites, 30,000 communists and 36,000 trade unionists to the Red Army on the Southern Front in the autumn of 1919 did the Red Army rout Denikin.[58]

Nor did the performance of the Red Army significantly improve by the end of the civil war. The Red Army lacked the capacity even to crush revolts by small groups of often poorly armed rebels (Tambov, Makhno and Kronstadt revolts) without often becoming a threat to the regime by mass desertion to the enemy or outright revolt. In the Kronstadt revolt the logical instrument of repression, the Seventh Army in Petrograd, was considered so unreliable that units were disarmed and confined to their barracks for, "They might well refuse to fire on the soldiers or even go over to their side."[59] Even the reliable troops, buttressed by communists, *kursanty* (officer-cadets) and Chekists failed miserably in their first assault on Kronstadt. Despite the presence of Chekist machine-gunners in the rear of the troops, some soldiers defected to the rebels, others refused to advance and at least one group sent a delegation to the rebels to find out their demands.[60]

[54] S. I. Gusev, op. cit. p. 121.
[55] V. I. Lenin, op. cit. Vol. 33, p. 41.
[56] N. Kakurin, *Kak Srazhalas' Revolyutsiya (1919–1920)* (Gosizdat, Moscow, 1926), Vol. 2, p. 249.
[57] David Footman, *Civil War in Russia* (Praeger, New York, 1962), pp. 274–75.
[58] A. A. Grechko, *Vooruzhennye Sily Sovetskogo Gosudarstva* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1974), p. 27.
[59] Paul Avrich, *Kronstadt 1921* (Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 153–54.
[60] Ibid. pp. 153–54.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A similar pattern emerged in the early stages of the Tambov and Makhno revolts. When regular army troops were first sent in 1920 to crush the Tambov revolt, many soldiers and commanders of peasant origins deserted to Antonov, the leader of the revolt.[61] In late November 1920 a Red Army division surrounded Makhno's small force of less than 2,500 men but was routed. Three days later two more Red Army divisions were routed by much smaller Makhno forces. In these Red Army disasters, Makhno, not totally implausibly, claimed the capture of 14,000–16,000 men, several thousand of whom volunteered to fight for Makhno! [62]

In lieu of regular military action, the Bolsheviks relied heavily on a mixture of political concessions, Chekist repression and massive mobilizations of reliable elements. Political concessions were crucial in undermining the political base of these revolts. The New Economic Policy pacified the peasantry by replacing the hated forced requisitions with a tax in kind and by creating private markets to trade peasant surpluses. It was no accident that only after the introduction of NEP in March 1921 was Makhno forced to leave Russia for Rumania (August 1921) and Antonov was killed by a special Cheka unit (June 1922). Furthermore, the successful second assault on Kronstadt was launched the day after the introduction of NEP and increased rations for Petrograd workers. As the Soviet historians Gusev and Eritsyan have written, " The transition to NEP created the decisive precondition for the full extirpation of SR-kulak banditry." [63]

Chekist repression was especially important in the suppression of the Makhno and Tambov revolts. In both cases the Cheka made an extensive search of suspected bandit villages. It killed all activists and those found with a weapon. Families of bandits were taken away as hostages. Antonov-Ovseenko, in August 1921, in a secret report to Lenin about the Tambov revolt, disclosed that 5,000 hostages were then in concentration camps, 663 bandits and hostages had been shot, and several hundred homes in the Tambov region had been burned.[64] As Singleton has stated, " Against a backdrop of mass executions and burning villages, the Red Army finally crushed the partisans." [65]

Finally, many elements were mobilized to reinforce and replace regular army units. In the second successful assault on Kronstadt, the

[61] *The Trotsky Papers* (Mouton, The Hague, 1971), Vol. 2, p. 505.

[62] P. Arshinov, *Istoriya Makhnovskogo Dvizheniya (1918–1921)* (Group of Russian Anarchists in Germany, Berlin, 1923), pp. 189–90. Although Arshinov was a Makhno follower, his account is plausible. The official five-volume Soviet history of the civil war significantly omits any mention of these encounters. Furthermore, Makhno's exceptionally light treatment of prisoners (nearly all of whom were allowed to go home) and the great difficulty encountered by the Bolsheviks in subduing his movement enhance the plausibility of the figures.

[63] K. V. Gusev and Kh. A. Eritsyan, *Ot Soglashatel'stva k Kontrrevolyutsii* (Mysl', Moscow, 1968), p. 394.

[64] *The Trotsky Papers*, op. cit. Vol. 2, pp. 533–35, 543–51.

[65] Seth Singleton, " The Tambov Revolt," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (September 1966), p. 510.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bolsheviks mobilized whole battalions of *kursanty,* large numbers of Komsomolites and communists, Cheka units and even 300 delegates to the 10th Party congress then in session. These same basic elements were used in the final suppression of the peasant revolts. Furthermore, *kursanty,* communists, Komsomolites and Chekists were recruited in such numbers that, added to reliable Red Army units, they could and did overwhelm the rebels in sheer numerical terms.

The revolt in March 1921 of the Kronstadt sailors, once called by Trotsky the "pride of the revolution," highlighted the unreliability of the Red Army. Apart from a few elite units (such as Budenny's First Cavalry Army) and some talented commanders (such as Yakir and Tukhachevsky) who rushed from front to front during the civil war, the fighting ability of the Red Army was abysmal. Even the 1920 campaign against the weak Polish army resulted in a disastrous rout which ended only in front of Minsk. It is little wonder that in 1920 Lenin declared in a pamphlet: "Needless to say, there can be no question of comparing the military strength of the RSFSR with that of the capitalist powers. In this respect we are incomparably weaker than they are. . . ." He speculated, "There can be no doubt that the most insignificant concentration of forces by these three powers (Britain, France and Japan) would have been quite enough to win a victory over us in a few months if not a few weeks." [66] Similarly, in December 1920 Lenin conceded that, "We do not possess one-hundredth of the forces of the combined imperialist forces." [67]

In short, hanging tenuously to power, the Party was forced to rely on an alien and often ineffective officer corps and army. The fear of Bonapartism was reinforced by the unreliability of the army. And yet, the Party needed to rely on the army to help win the civil war. Control of the army became a major concern of the Party. The image of an ineffectual army was reinforced by its role in society during the civil war. The army exercised no political leadership in society. Its attempts to perform economic production and serve as a role model for society ended in failure.[68]

THE People's Liberation Army, on the other hand, emerged from the civil war as a strong and effective force. The Chinese civil war (1946–49) evolved in a pattern quite different from that of the Russian civil war. During the first year of the civil war, the Kuomin-

[66] V. I. Lenin, op. cit. Vol. 31, pp. 383–85. [67] Ibid. Vol. 31, p. 413.

[68] In 1920 the Red Army, using by various estimates labour armies numbering 159,000–400,000 men, became extensively involved in simple mass production. The effort was soon discontinued because of "meagre results." (See V. S. Vladimirtsev, *Partiya-Organizator Razgroma Kontrrevolyutsii Na Yuge,* Voenizdat, Moscow, 1971, pp. 213, 219; *The Trotsky Papers,* op. cit. Vol. 2, p. 840.) A similar situation existed with the use of the army as a role model. In 1920 Lenin declared that "What has been organized in the Red Army must also be created on all the fronts of labour." But, after the Kronstadt revolt and adoption of NEP, Lenin in January 1922 contended that ". . . military methods of operation are least of all applicable to the trade unions." See V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniya,* op. cit. Vol. 30, p. 321; Vol. 33, p. 167.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tang armies were on the offensive while the communist armies retreated and concentrated on mobilizing their resources. But, in 1948 and 1949 the PLA conducted a 2,000-mile victorious march across the face of China and thoroughly crushed the Kuomintang armies.

Unlike the Red Army, the PLA had evolved over time a popular nationalist and agrarian reform appeal to the peasant majority in the ranks and non-commissioned officer positions. The PLA was able to create a large Party stratum, roughly 20 per cent–25 per cent of the army, which played a critically important role in enhancing the fighting capacity of the army.[69] The existence of a lengthy gestation period prior to the civil war (1927–45) gave the Party time to institutionalize and perfect mechanisms of control. As a consequence, the PLA plagued in its early days (1927–35) by treason and desertion, had overcome these problems by the time of the decisive civil war (1946–49). No major cases of treason were recorded during the civil war. Even if desertion were hidden under other categories (such as "missing" and "taken prisoner") in official Chinese communist statistics, the total number of deserters (less than 200,000) were minimal beside those of the Red Army.[70]

The gestation period also allowed the creation of a large, cohesive and experienced reliable officer corps, intimately fused with the Party. While only 10 per cent of the full and alternate members of the Russian Communist Party Central Committee in 1921 were army men, fully 51 per cent of all members of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee were army men. Further, unlike the Russian case, all Chinese army representatives were both old revolutionaries and career soldiers. Nearly all the key Chinese army officers belonged to the Central Committee. A similar situation prevailed throughout the officer corps. While only 10 per cent of the Red Army officer corps in 1920 belonged to the Party, nearly all PLA officers by 1949 belonged to the Party.[71] The innumerable campaigns of the Chinese army in the period 1927–45 weeded out dissidents and incompetent officers and allowed time for the creation of a capable, experienced officer corps.

By the time of the decisive civil war the PLA had become an effective army. In contrast with the minimal battlefield mobilization capacity of the Red Army (which could mobilize rarely more than 5 per cent of all soldiers for any campaign), the PLA demonstrated

[69] Davis Bobrow, op. cit. pp. 216, 714–716 and John Gittings, *The Role of the Chinese Army* (Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 111.

[70] *Tret'ya Grazhdanskaya Revoliutsionnaya Voina v Kitai* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1958), pp. 105, 113, 118. During the much less favourable circumstances of the Korean War, the Chinese army, numbering 700,000 men at its peak, suffered only 21,000 POWs. See William Bradbury, *et al.*, *Mass Behavior in Battle and Captivity: The Communist Soldier in the Korean War* (University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. viii.

[71] During the 1927–35 period the Chinese army had been plagued by desertion and treason in a manner closely resembling that of the Red Army in the 1918–21 period.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a very substantial mobilization capacity for key battles. In three key campaigns at the end of the civil war, the PLA mobilized at least 20 per cent of its manpower, or 700,000–800,000 men.[72] Unlike the ineffectual Red Army, the People's Liberation Army staged a triumphal march across the huge land mass of the country in the last two years of the civil war. It needed no external reinforcements, no extensive secret police coercion and no political concessions to crush the remaining internal opposition at the end of the civil war. In the Korean War, despite serious technological deficiencies, the Chinese army pushed the powerful forces of the United Nations out of North Korea and then proceeded to stalemate them around the 38th parallel.

Furthermore, the Chinese army played an important role in society by the end of the civil war. During the period of military rule in the provinces, from 1949 to 1952, the army performed important governmental and even Party functions. In 1949 and 1950 it engaged in extensive economic production and served as a "school of communism." Intertwined with a trusted and effective army, the Party relied heavily on the army in the civil war period. This psychological trust and structural interrelationship played an important role in the post-civil war period.[73]

GIVEN the great tasks of economic reconstruction, governmental consolidation and socialist construction which faced the parties in underdeveloped China and the Soviet Union at the end of the civil wars, a strong and effective army would be a major asset to them. Effective and legitimate large-scale organizations are uncommon in underdeveloped countries. If such an organization were closely tied to and trusted by the party, as the PLA was, then it could play a major role in party affairs and not pose a real threat to the party. On the other hand, a large, weak and ineffectual army, alien to the party and incapable of suppressing revolts without often becoming a danger to the regime, would represent a major threat to the party. An army such as the Red Army would need to undergo massive demobilization and prolonged renewal of its officer corps in order to create a new, more effective force. Such a task would be prolonged by the very limited resources of an underdeveloped country and by the difficulties experienced by men of proletarian and peasant background in mastering the techniques required for becoming officers.[74]

[72] V. I. Glunin, *Tret'ya Grazhdanskaya Revoliutsionnaya Voina v Kitai (1946–1949)* (Vostochnaya Literatura, Moscow, 1958), p. 140, and Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works* (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1967), Vol. 4, pp. 264–66. The three campaigns were Liaohsi-Shenyang (September–November 1948), Huai-Hai (November 1948–January 1949) and Peking-Tientsin (January 1949).

[73] Indeed, many scholars have even spoken of an army/Party fusion in the pre-1950 period.

[74] While in 1928 a phenomenal 87 per cent of those taken into military school had less than seven years of schooling, even by 1932 the typical student sent by the Party to military-technical school had only seven years of education. As Voropaev and Iovlev

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the lengthy interim period, the army could hardly play an important role in party affairs. Instead, the party would seek to control this potentially dangerous and alien force.

The party, given the enormous difficulties involved in conducting the revolutionary transformation of society, needed an agent to maintain order and repress all opposition to this transformation. The choice of a reliable and effective agent depended on the heritage of the civil war, on the nature of the revolutionary transformation of society and on the relation of the agent to the dominant party faction.

In the Soviet Union the massive Stalinist transformation from above, conducted in a short time and against widespread opposition, necessitated the extensive use of force and terror. The army, dominated even in 1930 by apathetic peasants in the ranks and non-commissioned officer positions, could not be considered a reliable force to suppress peasant revolts against collectivization and dekulakization.[75] The Party stratum in the army was small. Dominated in its upper ranks by *voenspets* and non-Stalinist commanders, the officer corps was not an integral part of the dominant Stalinist faction.[76] The rise of serious military threats to the Soviet Union in the 1930s forced the army to focus on purely military tasks.[77] The creation of forced-labour camps, the widescale shooting and terrorizing of civilians and the " application . . . of massive and sharp forms of repression " were tasks antithetical to the burgeoning professionalism in the army.[78]

Instead, the elite, carefully selected secret police troops, notable for their reliability and effectiveness, could be utilized in conjunction with other forces (as armed detachments of workers) to carry out the necessary repression. Unlike the army leadership, the secret police leadership formed an intimate part of the Stalinist faction. The large secret police forces could, by the existence of a secret network within the army, effectively cross-check any attempt by the army (already isolated from the Party and society) to interfere with the Stalinist programme.

have asserted, " The low level of general education, weak knowledge of mathematics, physics and chemistry created for the military cadres enormous difficulties in mastering complicated military technique." See D. A. Voropaev and A. M. Iovlev, *Bor'ba KPSS Za Sozdanie Voennykh Kadrov* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1960), pp. 80, 129, 132.

[75] In 1930 57·9 per cent of all Red Army men were peasants while in 1928 even 50 per cent of all officers were peasants. See *KPSS, XVII S"ezd, 26 Yanvaraya–10 Fevralya, 1934, Stenograficheskii Otchet* (Partizdat, Moscow, 1934), p. 233, and *V. I. Lenin i Sovetskie Vooruzhennye Sily* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1967), p. 288.

[76] In 1926, for example, *voenspets* commanded six of the eight military districts and occupied many key staff positions.

[77] So weak was the Red Army in 1929 that Shatagin and Prusanov have written that " Despite evident successes in strengthening the Soviet Army, nevertheless it . . . was much weaker than the army of the strongest imperialist powers." See N. I. Shatagin and I. P. Prusanov, *Sovetskaya Armiya—Armiya Novogo Tipa* (Voenizdat, Moscow, 1957), p. 109.

[78] Stalin and Molotov used this phrase in a secret decree of 8 May 1933. See Sergei Gordeyev, *Kollektivizatsiya Sel'skogo Khozyaistva v Smolenskoi Oblasti v Periode 1929–1934*, p. 285.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The roots of this crucial choice lay in the civil war period. The army had proven itself a markedly ineffectual force and at times posed a direct threat to the Party through revolt or desertion to the enemy. Given the extensive opposition to the Bolsheviks with their narrow social base, the Party needed an elite, reliable force to carry out extensive liquidation of urban class enemies and peasant revolts. Such a force was the secret police. Led almost exclusively by trusted Old Bolsheviks and created even before the Red Army, the secret police emerged from the civil war as an effective and revolutionarily legitimated force, intimately connected with the Party elite.[79] When the time came to "renew" the civil war in the 1930s, the secret police was a logical instrument to carry out the necessary repression.

In China, however, army and Party had been fused during the prolonged civil war. As the army had developed into an effective and revolutionary legitimated force by the time of the decisive civil war (1946–49), no independent secret police force arose as its rival. Both before and during the Cultural Revolution, the Maoists turned to the army as a major base of support. The revolutionary transformation from below embodied in the Cultural Revolution did not require mass repression. Instead, it called for the use of a politicized force, capable of reconciling factions, maintaining order, conducting propaganda and even rebuilding the Party at a local level. The army was such a force. During the 1950–58 period and the Cultural Revolution it also subordinated the smaller, possibly rival, public security forces under its command.

WE have seen the critical importance of the civil wars in the political roles of the Soviet and Chinese armies in the two decades after the end of the civil wars. In the Soviet Union the Party leadership, fearing incipient Bonapartism and seeing frequent treason in the officer corps in the civil war, lacked trust in the army leadership. The feeling of psychological alienation was deepened by the frequent failures of the army which made it and its leaders seem markedly ineffectual. Finally, the lack of Party membership of most army leaders in the civil war reinforced the psychological distance with a structural one. In China, however, given the fusion of army and Party in the civil war era, the army and Party elites were structurally interdependent. Given the lengthy revolutionary past of the army leaders, the Party leaders felt confidence in the army leaders,

[79] Among leading Chekists in the civil war were Abakumov, Agranov, Antipov, Bakayev, Bokiy, Chugurin, Dizhbit, Dukis, Dzerzhinsky, Eyduk, Fomin, Kadomtsev, Kedrov, Kolsnikov, Latsis, Mantsev, Menzhinsky, Nikofonov, Pavlunovsky, Peters, Reksteyn, Rusanov, Tulupov and Yurovsky. Almost all of them were old revolutionaries, with the median date of joining the Party being 1906. In great contrast to the army leaders, the Chekist leaders had belonged to the Party as long as the top Party leaders. This conferred on the Cheka a degree of trust and legitimation lacking in the army.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The demonstrated effectiveness of the army reinforced the psychological and structural closeness of the army and Party leadership. Under these circumstances it was hardly surprising that the Soviet army played such a minimal role and the Chinese army such an important one in the decision-making process.

In this article we have explored one of many themes in civilian-military relations. The comparative analysis of civil wars and different paths of revolutionary development may also be extended to the study of the military in other communist countries and non-communist revolutionary countries which have undergone a revolutionary transformation of society. The dynamic variables of the civil wars and paths of revolutionary development of society may contribute to a more adequate understanding of civilian-military relations in communist countries and of the differences between various armies in communist countries.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Going Against the Tide": Political Dissent in China*

Susan L. Shirk

RECENT events in China have astonished foreign observers. Teng Hsiao-p'ing and other "moderate" Communist Party leaders, after seizing power and eliminating the "radical" Gang of Four in 1976, have not merely returned to pre-Cultural Revolution policies—a move which could have been predicted—but have devised an ambitious economic modernization strategy which involves opening China to Western technology and investment. The normalization of relations between the People's Republic of China and the United States has been accomplished with surprising speed. In order to assuage popular dissatisfaction and improve workers' morale, the new leadership has not only raised salaries, reinstituted bonuses, and supplied more consumer goods, but has promised democracy and legal protections as well. The most remarkable new development is the wave of open political criticism which has swept over China and has been tolerated by the Party leadership. Criticism of the political system has been expressed in posters on the "wall of democracy" in Peking and in other cities, in mass demonstrations, and in interviews with Western journalists. The dissidents have even been so bold as to criticize the late Communist Party Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

What is the meaning of this upsurge of political dissent? Will there be more or less dissent in the future? Which groups in China are likely to produce dissidents? Which aspects of the Chinese system are likely to draw fire from future critics? Will the actions of the Party leadership satisfy the critics or stimulate more dissent?

In order to address these questions we will first briefly examine the recent history of dissent in China and analyse the most articulate expression of post-Cultural Revolution dissent, the Li I-che poster of 1974. Then we will discuss the content of the 1978–79 wall posters, Teng Hsiao-p'ing's recent policy moves and their impact on dissent, and the future of dissent in China.

AS Ross Terrill has noted, this is the third wave of political dissent in post-Liberation China.[1] The first wave of dissent occurred dur-

* The author wishes to express her appreciation to the National Fellows Program, The Hoover Institution, Stanford University, for its support during the 1978–79 year. This essay draws on the author's earlier thoughts on this subject developed in a paper presented at the October 1977 Workshop on Chinese Youth sponsored by the University of Texas at Dallas and in an article, "Human Rights—What About China?" published in the December 1977 *Foreign Policy*.

[1] Ross Terrill, *Bulletin*, December 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing the "Hundred Flowers" period in 1957 when Mao Tse-tung encouraged the "blooming and contending" of heterodox political ideas. Mao's motives then were similar to those of Teng Hsiao-p'ing today. Both leaders hoped that if young people and intellectuals were free to speak their minds, they would be more committed to the political system and work harder for economic modernization. But in 1957, Chairman Mao and other Party leaders were shocked by the vehemence and range of the opinions which were expressed; after only a few months they clamped down with an anti-rightist campaign to criticize and silence the dissenters.

Although there were various dissident views expressed during the brief Hundred Flowers period,[2] the dominant perspective of this first wave of dissent was liberal democratic. The critics demonstrated little knowledge of or commitment to Marxism. They challenged the Communist Party's monopoly of power and advocated multi-party Western-style constitutional democracy for China.

The second wave of dissent swept over China during the 1966–69 Cultural Revolution. Troubled by bureaucratic stagnation and elitist privilege in the Communist Party, Mao Tse-tung took the bold step of mobilizing young people to criticize the "capitalist-roaders" in the Party. Schools were closed, and student Red Guards poured into the streets demanding the purification of Chinese socialism. Again, Mao was amazed at what he had wrought. The Red Guards advocated extreme positions, splintered into a multitude of factions, and threw Chinese cities into chaos with their violent factional fights. Having disabled the Communist Party, Mao had to turn to the People's Liberation Army to re-establish social order. Many Red Guards were disillusioned by the aftermath of the campaign: army cadres assumed control, few policies were radically altered, and millions of urban youth were resettled in the countryside.

The wave of dissent during the Cultural Revolution can be characterized as radical socialist or anarchist. The Red Guards condemned as revisionist all deviations from the utopian Maoist vision of social altruism and equality, criticized signs of foreign or traditional culture as bourgeois decadence, and attacked non-revolutionary personal habits and sentiments with puritanical zeal. Whereas the Hundred Flowers critics believed that abuses of Communist Party power could be eliminated only through party competition and democratic institutions, the Cultural Revolution generation of dissidents proposed remedies such as non-institutionalized Paris Commune democracy and smashing the state.[3]

The political dissent of the 1970s is the most difficult to label.

[2] Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Hundred Flowers Campaign and the Chinese Intellectuals* (Praeger, New York, 1960); Dennis J. Doolin, *Communist China, The Politics of Student Opposition* (The Hoover Institution, Stanford, 1964).

[3] Klaus Mehnert, *Peking and the New Left: At Home and Abroad* (China Research Monographs No. 4, Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1969).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On the one hand, the content of many wall posters harks back to the fascination during the Hundred Flowers period with liberal, democratic, political and legal institutions; the critics of today are much more receptive to Western ideas than were their predecessors of the Cultural Revolution. But on the other hand, the third wave of dissent reflects the mark left upon Chinese society by the Cultural Revolution. Current dissidents complain about excessive politicization of social life, political ritualism, opportunistic political competition, arbitrary political labelling, and worship of the leader—phenomena which earlier critics had not had to confront.

Moreover, in contrast with the first and second waves of dissent, few of the 1970s dissidents appear to be high school or university students. Instead, most of the authors of wall posters are people in their late 20s or early 30s who attended school before 1966 and who participated in the Cultural Revolution. Unlike students now in school, they have little to lose by speaking out. Their pre-1966 school moral education (based largely on Liu Shao-ch'i's "How to be a Good Communist") gave them a concern for public welfare. During the Cultural Revolution Mao Tse-tung taught them to challenge political authorities. As Red Guards they acquired rhetorical and strategic skills which they can put to use today, and they created organizations which may still survive as friendship networks or underground groups. Most of them are now young workers or peasants, but their formative political experience was the Cultural Revolution. The most significant fact about the third wave of Chinese dissent is that, for many of the dissidents, this is their second attempt to reform the system; they are still reacting to the experience of the Cultural Revolution.

WHILE the major themes of dissent in the 1970s—democracy, legality, and the degeneration of political life caused by the Cultural Revolution—were addressed in the multitude of wall posters which appeared during the winter of 1978–79, none of these recent posters offers as extensive or sophisticated a treatment of these issues as did the so-called "Li I-che poster" put up in the southern city of Canton in November 1974. This poster, entitled "Concerning Socialist Democracy and Legal System," because of its length (it extended for 100 yards, covering 67 sheets of newsprint with a text of 20,000 Chinese characters) and its attempt to link the three issues in a coherent analysis of the Chinese political system, is the best guide to the third wave of Chinese dissent.

The three authors of the document were former Red Guards, identified as Li Cheng-t'ien, a Wuhanese youth who graduated from Canton Fine Arts College in 1966, Ch'en I-yang and Huang Hsi-che, both of whom attended Cantonese high schools on the eve of the Cultural Revolution. The authors (probably aged 25–32) combined their names as Li I-che, the *nom de plume* signed on the poster.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chinese authorities thought the poster posed such a formidable challenge that they not only declared it "reactionary through and through" and arrested at least one of the authors (Li Cheng-t'ien), but also drafted a poster rebutting the critique and denouncing the critics. Both the wall poster and its rebuttal became available to foreign analysts through Taiwan and Hong Kong,[4] and a French translation with commentary was published in book form.[5] The poster evoked considerable interest among European leftists who are increasingly critical of Chinese communism, and anti-communists on Taiwan also made much of this expression of mainland dissent.[6] Despite recent rehabilitations of "rightist" intellectuals and "capitalist-roader" officials, the three authors of the poster are reported still to be undergoing labour reform in a coal mine. During January 1979 posters appeared in Peking and Canton demanding that their sentence be reviewed. As one Canton broadside argued about their case, "If you can rehabilitate high officials, why not people who have no fame?" [7]

Briefly, the argument of the poster is that Chinese socialism has generated a new ruling class in the Communist Party and state apparatus which uses its political power to appropriate privileges for itself. In order to maintain its privileges, the elite must suppress democratic rights, for otherwise the people would protest at such abuses of power. In order to correct these abuses, procedures permitting democratic oversight and protecting civil rights must be created. Attempts made during the Cultural Revolution to reform the Party elite through periodic mass mobilization and criticism, and by heightening the political consciousness of both cadres and citizens, are considered to have failed. Such supposed remedies were not only ineffective, but also left their own taint on Chinese political life by promoting political ritualism, formalism, and manipulation of political labels. Because the shifting, self-serving use of political labels raises serious doubts about the moral wisdom of political leadership, people can no longer rely on leaders for guidance and fairness. The people must acquire the power to exercise democratic oversight and they must have a working legal system to protect themselves—and Chinese socialism—from a new ruling class which is perverting revolutionary politics to serve its own ends.

[4] Li I-che, "Concerning Socialist Democracy and Legal System," *Issues and Studies*, Vol. XII, No. 1 (January 1976), pp. 110–49; Hsüan Chi-wen, "Criticizing 'Concerning the Socialist Democracy and Legal System,'" *Issues and Studies*, Vol. XII, No. 2 (February 1976), pp. 109–35; Li I-che, "Kuan-yü she-hui-chu-i te min-chu yü fa-chih," *Ming Pao Monthly*, 27 Nov. 1975, pp. 11–20.

[5] *Chinois, si vous saviez . . .* (Bibliothèque Asiatique, Paris, 1976); also see Simon Leys, "Behind the Turmoil in China," *Dissent*, Summer 1976, pp. 236–38.

[6] Chung-kuo ta-lu wen-t'i yen-chiu-so (Research Institute for Mainland China), *Ts'ung Li I-che ta-tzu-pao k'an chung-kung ch'ien-t'u* (Looking at the Future of Communist China through the Li I-che Big Character Poster) (Taipei, 1976).

[7] *The New York Times*, 14 Jan. 1979.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CLOSELY following the lines of Milovan Djilas's analysis of the communist system,[8] the authors of the Li I-che poster argued that the new ruling class consisted of Communist Party cadres who based their power not on economic ownership (as in capitalist systems) but on their political roles in the party and state. Under socialism, private economic ownership was virtually eliminated and "real" capitalists could no longer convert it to political power; but "capitalist-roaders" could pull the reverse trick by turning political power into economic privilege. These "capitalist-roaders" changed "public into private" and "redistributed the properties and powers of the proletariat in a bourgeois manner" (p. 114).[9]

Mao Tse-tung himself was alarmed about the growth of a privileged, autocratic elite within the Communist Party, but the young critics went beyond Mao's analysis to argue that the emergence of this new ruling group was inevitable, "an objective thing that is generated out of our country's socio-economic conditions and cannot be changed according to men's will" (p. 143). In other words, it was a mistake for Mao to transform the issue into a "question of 'good people' and 'bad people'" (p. 144). The growth of a privileged, autocratic elite under socialism was not a matter of personality or personal morality, but an institutional inevitability. When political and economic power were held by party and state cadres without democratic supervision or institutional safeguards, there was a tendency towards corruption, special privileges, and the suppression of heterodox opinions. (As some Western scholars might put it, the problem was the growth of a strong socialist *state* with its own interests and resources.)[10]

The inequality in one generation became long-term stratification as cadres passed down privileged roles to their children through education:

> What has been commonly observed is that some leaders have expanded this necessary preferential treatment granted by the Party and the people into political and economic special privileges, and then extended them boundlessly to their families and clansmen, relatives and friends, even to the degree of exchanging special privileges [among themselves], of obtaining for their children actual inheritance of political and economic positions through such channels as "taking the back door," and of changing the socialist direction of the enterprise in favor of their private interests . . . (pp. 114–15).

Complaints about cadres' use of personal influence to obtain uni-

[8] Milovan Djilas, *The New Class* (Praeger, New York, 1957).

[9] All quotations and citations are from the *Issues and Studies* translated version of the poster. Syntax and word choice have not been corrected.

[10] For example, see Edward Friedman's review of *China's Uninterrupted Revolution*, edited by Victor Nee and James Peck, *The China Quarterly*, No. 68 (December 1976), pp. 840–43, and his paper "The Chinese State and The Limits of Interest Group Theory: One Cheer for Totalitarianism," presented to The Workshop on the Pursuit of Political Interest in the People's Republic of China, Ann Arbor, August 1977.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

versity places for their own children and those of their friends and relatives were heard frequently during the Cultural Revolution, but the practice, called "taking the back door," became increasingly widespread under the post-Cultural Revolution admissions system which substituted recommendations for examinations and grades. Because only a tiny proportion of Chinese youth were able to enter college, young people like Li Cheng-t'ien were acutely sensitive to inequalities in the selection process.

The authors of the poster asserted that the privileges of the Party elite stemmed not just from their use of "pull" but also from political favouritism which was institutionalized in the policies and structures of the Chinese political system. In a system where decisions about whose short stories are published and whose paintings are exhibited, who is admitted to university, who is sent out for cadre re-education in a May Seventh Cadre School, who is recruited for preferred city jobs and who is sent to work in the countryside, all involved judgments of people's political attitudes and values, cadres and their offspring always had the edge. Because it was so difficult to infer people's values from their behaviour—sorting out the phoney opportunists from the genuine believers was problematical—class background labels were often used as measures of political attitudes; people whose parents were workers, peasants or cadres were considered more likely to support revolutionary values than those raised in bourgeois families. This short cut to political evaluation reinforced the advantages enjoyed by cadres and their children, and was a matter of great controversy among Red Guard groups during the Cultural Revolution.[11] The poster argued that distributive decisions had become even more politicized and class-biased since the Cultural Revolution: "... in almost everything which is called a 'newborn thing,' the privileged can use their divine presence and demonstrate their divine power" (p. 143).

The dissidents also criticized the high salaries paid to senior cadres as having "corruptive effects on the regime" and a bad "influence over the new social relations" (p. 143).

> We are not Utopian socialists; therefore, we acknowledge that there exist in our society at the present stage various kinds of differences which cannot be eliminated by a single law or decree. But the law governing the development of the socialist revolutionary movement is not to enhance the differences but to eliminate them, and more, so not to allow these differences to be expanded into economic and political privileges. Special privileges are fundamentally opposite to the interests of the people. Why should we be so shy about the criticism of special privileges? (p. 144).

[11] For an excellent analysis of the controversy see Gordon White, *The Politics of Class and Class Origin: The Case of the Cultural Revolution* (Contemporary China Papers, No. 9, Australian National University, Canberra, 1976).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN the Li I-che poster, the existence of a privileged political elite was inextricably linked to the curtailment of democratic rights. For the elite to maintain its privileges, it must silence public opinion; otherwise people would protest.

> . . . they must, to maintain their vested privileges and obtain more preferential treatment, attack the upright revolutionary comrades who insist on principles, suppress the masses who rise to oppose their special privileges, and illegally deprive these comrades and masses of their political rights and economic interests. Thus they have completed the qualitative change from "public servants of the people" to "masters of the people," becoming what we call "power-holders taking the capitalist road" (p. 115).

The authors argued that the only solution to the problem of privilege was institutional: i.e. it lay in democratic accountability and oversight. Mass movements and political education were not sufficient.

> . . . power is the most corruptive agent of men. A man's ascension in status is the most trying test to see if he is working for the benefit of the majority, or for the benefit of a minority. Whether or not one can preserve his spirit of serving the people is chiefly dependent upon the revolutionary supervision by the people, in addition to his own efforts; whereas the mass movements are the richest sources for a revolutionary to preserve his revolutionary spirit. How should the rights or revolutionary supervision of the masses of people over the leadership at various levels in the Party and the state be stipulated? And how should it be explicitly stipulated that when certain cadres (especially the high-ranking cadres in Central organizations) have lost the trust of the broad masses of people, the people "can dismiss them at any time"? (pp. 144–45).

Mao Tse-tung recognized the potentially autocratic features of communist rule, but his approach to the problem was Confucian. The Confucian approach assumes that good government depends not on laws, but on virtuous leaders, and that those who have lost their virtue can regain it through ideological remoulding, criticism—self-criticism, and stints of manual labour. Virtuous cadres welcome the sincere criticism of citizens and urge them to speak their minds. When citizens or cadres make mistakes, the punishments should not be harsh, because the goal is, as Mao put it, to "cure the illness to save the patient." Mao frequently complained about "some cadres who are afraid of the masses initiating discussion and putting forward ideas which differ from those of the leaders and leading organizations. As soon as problems are discussed, they suppress the activism of the masses and do not allow others to speak out." [12] While Maoist doctrine

[12] In the same speech (which was recently published for the first time in China) he ridiculed cadres who did not allow people to speak, "[You] think you are tigers, and that nobody will dare to touch your arse . . . You think that nobody will really dare to

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

legitimates the demand for democratic oversight by citizens, the Maoist system rarely satisfies the demand in practice and provides no institutional guarantees for such oversight.

Although the young authors of the Li I-che poster did not expicitly criticize Mao's approach to the supervision of elites—unlike more recent dissidents, they were still reluctant to censure Mao himself—their approach to the problem was Legalist while his was Confucian. They had begun to lose confidence in the rectitude of the central leadership and to question the efficacy of ideological reform. Therefore they looked to laws rather than to political education as the means of restoring good government; and they believed that institutional safeguards were required to make citizen oversight effective. Although they offered no concrete institutional proposals they did advocate an electoral process to choose even the top national officials.

They also demanded enforcement of such constitutional rights as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association, and freedom to air opinions in big-character posters, rights which they experienced during the Cultural Revolution but which were stripped away after the campaign. "This Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has not accomplished the tasks of a great proletarian cultural revolution, because it has not enabled the people to hold firmly in their hands the weapon of extensive people's democracy" (p. 133). They found the removal of wall posters by municipal "Political Appearance Cleaning and Sweeping Teams" particularly ironic in view of the fact that foreigners believed wall posters to be a Chinese democratic innovation: "When handbills written in big letters were posted on walls in front of the Ethiopian palace, Western news agencies unhesitatingly called them 'Chinese type big-character posters.' But, the 'Chinese type big-character posters' have met disasters in China" (pp. 115–16).

The Li I-che poster asserted that the absence of democracy in China was only partially caused by the lack of institutional safeguards, and was also the result of citizen docility, which could be explained in historical terms:

> Our China has been transformed into a socialist society directly from a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society. The feudal rule which continued for more than two thousand years has left its ideology deeply rooted. A destructive blow has not been dealt to it in either the period of old democracy nor in the period of new democracy. The bad habits of autocracy and despotism are deeply imbued in the minds of the masses even in those of communists in general (p. 119).

But even in traditional China there were a few brave heroes willing

touch the arse of tigers like you? They damn well will!" ("Talk at an Enlarged Central Work Conference," 30 Jan. 1962, in Stuart Schram (ed.), *Chairman Mao Talks to the People* (Pantheon, New York, 1974), pp. 162 and 167).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to risk official displeasure in the name of truth. Li Cheng-t'ien and his co-authors had this kind of romantic self-image; their identification with the traditional role of the courageous, virtuous critic must have harmonized with the cultural values of their readers. They portrayed themselves as heroes who had survived one battle with tigers (i.e. the Cultural Revolution) but were so daring as to confront them again:

> We are, "allegedly," the youth who are "not afraid of tigers; but we are not unaware of the ferocity and cruelty of the tigers." We even dare to say that we are the survivors who were once bitten by that kind of animal but in the end could not be gnawed firmly between the teeth or swallowed; on our faces there are claw marks so that we are not handsome figures (p. 130).

But they complained that even such extreme valour was futile if the press were controlled. Lu Hsün,[13] the beloved revolutionary writer of the 1920s and '30s, found an audience through the Japanese press, while contemporary critics had no outlet at all.

> From ancient times to the present, there have always been in China some people who are not afraid of having their heads chopped off for the sake of speaking out. Lu Hsün was naturally one of those who was not afraid of beheading. But Lu Hsün could go to his Japanese friends and get his articles published; and, where can today's "five fear nots" [removal from one's post, expulsion from the Party, imprisonment, divorce and execution] people go to have their articles published? (p. 140).

"Concerning Socialist Democracy and Legal System," was both a critique of the Chinese system and a test of just how undemocratic it was. Like the brave critics of old, the authors of the poster tested the virtue of the rulers by observing their response to sincere criticism, an experiment which involved considerable risk.

> We also are trying to find out what will happen when we have violated the "prohibition" of the newspapers and offended the "taboo" of the journals. It might also be called an act of testing the "rites" in one's own person! (pp. 130–31).

The leaders revealed their lack of virtue by labelling the critique counter-revolutionary and arresting its authors.

The writers anticipated that their critiques of the system and calls for more democracy would be condemned as reactionary heresies. They knew that the major argument for limiting the expression of popular opinion was that with no such limitation the dissemination of false, counter-revolutionary ideas would gravely damage the cause of the revolution. But, echoing Mao's anti-authoritarian exhortations,

[13] Lu Hsün is a symbol of rebellion from Mao's lexicon. For Mao's praise of Lu Hsün see his "Yenan Forum on Literature and Art," May 1942, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. III (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1965), especially p. 96.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they argued that the revolution was strong enough to survive even reactionary ideas: "What is so 'frightening' about a heresy? Truth is developed out of the struggle with fallacies" (p. 113). They described the paradox implicit in the notion of democratic dictatorship: if you demand democracy, you must be a reactionary, and if you are a reactionary you must be deprived of democracy:

> They demand democracy; they demand a socialist legal system; and they demand the revolutionary rights and the human rights which protect the masses of people. "What? You demand democracy? You are reactionaries? Because you are reactionaries, we'll give you no democracy." But on the foreheads of the reactionaries there are inscribed no signs of "reactionary." . . . History has taught us that even under the conditions of the proletarian dictatorship the revolutionaries are sometimes regarded as reactionaries and deprived of democracy, while, on the other hand, the reactionaries are sometimes regarded as revolutionaries and as possessing democracy; and sometimes there have emerged the abnormal situations in which the revolutionaries are suppressed while the reactionaries soar higher and higher (p. 139).

This last point—that political labels are not fixed, but are shifting, manipulable and arbitrary—linked the critics' call for legal democratic protections with their perception that Chinese political life was degenerating.

THE Li I-che document was the first expression of post-Cultural Revolution political criticism to emerge from China. Disillusioned by the results of the Cultural Revolution, the authors no longer believed that mass mobilization and ideological remoulding would either eliminate the new elite or achieve democracy. Furthermore, they perceived that the Cultural Revolution had had deleterious effects on Chinese society, had exacerbated the degeneration of political life. They pointed to the regime's self-serving manipulation of labels as crucial evidence of its loss of moral vigour, and argued that this loss of moral vigour created the need for a true socialist legality to replace the existing arbitrary rule by rites.

The poster's argument about "rule by rites" (a traditional Confucian term used here to describe the arbitrary nature of political authority, especially since the Cultural Revolution) illuminated the problem inherent in the Chinese political system which rests on a behavioural definition of class combined with the notion of "democratic dictatorship." One of Mao's most significant political ideas was that classes could be differentiated on the basis of political behaviour rather than economic role, and that struggle among such classes continues under socialism. Decisions regarding the assignment of labels, about who is a leftist or rightist, who is a capitalist-roader or revolutionary thus become the core of Chinese politics. Labelling is particularly

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crucial in the context of democratic dictatorship, under which there is "democracy for the people and dictatorship over the reactionaries." [14] Mao offered only vague criteria for distinguishing between the people and the counter-revolutionaries, between expressions of citizen opinion which were "fragrant flowers" and those which were "poisonous weeds," [15] and acknowledged that individuals sometimes were suppressed because they were mislabelled as "counter-revolutionaries" and their ideas misconstrued as "poisonous weeds." [16] The constant danger in such a system is that those who call for more democracy will be condemned as counter-revolutionaries and stripped of their rights, and that members of the political elite will fend off the challenges of critics and rival leaders by labelling them as class enemies.

The authors of the Li I-che poster argued that 25 years after Liberation, political terms which once had authentic meanings, such as "rightist," "leftist," "reactionary," and "capitalist-roader," had been applied to individuals in such shifting, arbitrary, self-serving ways that they were no longer credible. Quoting a couplet from the popular traditional novel, *Dream of the Red Chamber*, they explained how political reality could be warped by giving things the wrong names: "When appearance is taken for reality, reality becomes appearance. Where nothing is taken for something, something becomes nothing" (p. 122). By questioning the validity of political labels and demanding a "rectification of names," the young critics cast doubt on the moral wisdom and legitimacy of the central authorities who assigned the labels.

The authors, and undoubtedly many other Chinese citizens as well, were confused by the rapid shifts in political labels. The term "capitalist-roader" was first applied to the elitist, bureaucratic Party cadres during the Cultural Revolution, but "ultra-leftist" leaders, attacked for excessive politicization of economic decisions and social life, subsequently were labelled "rightists" and "capitalist-roaders" in an apparent effort to protect "leftism" from taint. Lin Piao, the former Defence Minister and Mao's chosen successor, who was killed fleeing to Russia after an abortive coup in autumn 1971 (and who was the major target of the Li I-che poster) was an "ultra-leftist" who came to be called a "rightist." [17] Later the radical Shanghai "Gang of Four"—Chiang Ch'ing (Mao's widow), Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, Yao Wen-yuan, and Wang Hung-wen—who had attacked the old

[14] Mao Tse-tung, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," 30 June 1949, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. IV (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1965), p. 418.

[15] Mao Tse-tung, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People," 27 Feb. 1957 (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1966), pp. 40–42.

[16] Ibid., p. 36.

[17] "Whereas Lin Piao had been criticized in 1972 as an 'ultra-leftist,' in 1973 he became an 'ultra-rightist.'" (Merle Goldman, "China's Anti-Confucian Campaign, 1973–74," *The China Quarterly*, No. 63, September 1975, p. 437).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"capitalist-roader" cadres in the Party, such as Teng Hsiao-p'ing, were treated to some of their own medicine by being stigmatized as "capitalist-roaders pursuing a counter-revolutionary revisionist line, an ultra-right line." [18] Thus, the real-life definition of a "capitalist-roader" became one who was currently the target of political criticism.

Historical analyses were also designed for the short-term, instrumental objectives of leaders, and shifts in interpretation could be confusing. With evident glee, the writers caught the Party centre out on contradictory historical interpretations made at different times, and pointed to: "a very interesting fact . . . that we have found the great contradictions between the evaluation of historical figures made by our newspapers and journals in the period from late 1965 to early 1966 and the evaluation of historical figures made by our newspapers and journals now!" (p. 128).

The argument about shifts in political labels was partly a matter of self-defence for the authors of the Li I-che poster. They correctly predicted that they would be compared with those who had criticized the Party during the Hundred Flowers campaign of 1957 and would be condemned as "rightists." In their own defence, they pointed out that some of the opinions labelled "rightist" in 1957 were praised as leftist anti-revisionism 10 years later during the Cultural Revolution. Thus they could claim they were leftist revolutionaries and not rightist reactionaries.

> The reason that our "system" is frightening is, at last, because it has allegedly picked up the rubbish of the 1957 rightists. Yes, the slogans of "democracy" and "legal system" were once shouted loudly by the rightists. But, since 1966, have there not been a great many slogans shouted by the revolutionary rebels and the masses of people that were once shouted by the rightists? Some of our friends have not given a single thought to the facts as why did the slogans of "democracy" and "liberty" gather together in Budapest counterrevolutionaries in 1956 whereas the same slogans became the battle banners of the Polish working class on the South coast of the Baltic Sea in 1970; and why had the Soviet Union's sending troops to Hungary in 1956 been met with the opposition from the rightists in our country, whereas the Soviet Union's sending troops to Czechoslovakia in 1968 was met with the protests from the Chinese people! (p. 129).

As victims of sudden changes in political line during and after the Cultural Revolution, the young dissidents began to perceive other contradictions in Party statements and actions. Such was the suddenness of policy reversals that the authors were moved to remark ". . . in recent years the policies have been changed frequently, even to the degree that 'orders issued in the morning are changed in the same evening.'" (p. 146)

[18] "Great Historic Victory," editorial in *People's Daily*, *Red Flag*, and *Liberation Army Journal*, *Peking Review*, No. 44, 29 Oct. 1976.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As John Starr has pointed out, in a dialectical system, where groups are defined by political behaviour and conflict between groups is considered a constant feature of political life, someone must label the groups and determine which contradictions are antagonistic and which are non-antagonistic.[19] Although Mao Tse-tung warned cadres against the misuse of political labels to protect themselves and slander their enemies—"we mustn't put hats on people indiscriminately. Some of our comrades are in the habit of persecuting people with hats,"[20]—in Chinese political life there is a constant temptation for cadres to employ labels in their own self-interest. Once citizens like the authors of the Li I-che poster see leaders using labels in this way, the moral authority of those leaders is eroded. The Chinese expect moral leadership from politicians, and the long tenure of Chairman Mao Tse-tung reinforced this belief in the moral stature of political leadership. Although the young dissidents directed their criticism at Lin Piao, formerly Mao's chosen successor, and not at Mao himself, and were reluctant to question Mao's moral authority, this is where the questioning of political labels inevitably led them and the other dissidents of the 1970s.

THE years from 1968 to 1976—before, during and after the Cultural Revolution—saw a growing ritualization of Chinese political life. Efforts to cure the socialist system of its shortcomings by shifting people's allegiance from a corrupt Party to Mao the leader and by intensifying ideological struggle, when combined with the desire of both cadres and citizens to make a good political impression, turned political life into a series of ceremonies or contests. The authors blamed Lin Piao for the daily political rituals—readings of Mao's Thought, recitations of slogans, and discussions on how to apply Mao's Thought to decisions and actions—which they condemned as "empty politics":

> We have forgotten the giving prominence to [empty] politics which rewarded the lazy and punished the diligent, the "daily reading [of Mao's works and quotations]" which resembled the incantation of spells, the "discussion-application [of Mao's works and thoughts]" which became more and more hypocritical, the "revolution erupts from the depth of the soul" which became more absurd, the "manifestation of loyalty" which encouraged political speculation, the grotesque "loyalty dance," and the excruciatingly multitudinous rituals of showing loyalty—morning prayers, evening penitences, rallies falling-in, reporting for and quitting work and making duty shifts, buying and selling things, writing letters, making phone calls, even taking meals—which were invariably painted with violent religious colors and shrouded

[19] John Bryan Starr, *Continuing the Revolution: Studies in the Political Thought of Mao* (Princeton University Press, 1979).
[20] "Talk at an Enlarged Central Work Conference," p. 185.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> in such an atmosphere. In short, loyalty occupied one hundred percent of the time and one hundred percent of the space (p. 117).

Finding the slogans of the Anti-Confucius Campaign which dominated official rhetoric during 1973–74 suitable to their purpose, the authors of the wall poster summarized the unprincipled arbitrary features of political life as "rule by rites": "Their will was law. . . . They could, following their own inclination, suppress and exploit the slave, even to the degree of massacre; on the other hand, the slaves could only be absolutely submissive and were not allowed to resist. This is the so-called 'rule by rites'" (p. 135). Like the old Confucianism, the new, "modern rule by rites" allowed political leaders to impose their whims, made worship of the leader into a religion, and led to the degeneration of political principle. As the authors explained, the core or "sacred pillar" of the "rule by rites" was that attitudes towards the leader became the only criteria for judging and labelling people, "Whoever opposed Mao Tse-tung Thought will be struck down." Mao himself complained when Lin Piao promoted a personality cult of Chairman Mao, in which the Chairman was called a "genius."[21] The "little red book" and the "Mao-button" became badges of loyalty to the revolution, and no one dared be without them. The worship of Chairman Mao's genius perverted revolutionary principles to the point where, as the critics said, "Everyone must worship this 'genius,' be absolutely loyal to this 'genius,' and do everything according to the will of this 'genius.' Furthermore, whoever opposes this 'genius' will be struck down" (p. 119). Moreover, "The criterion of one's attitude towards 'genius' substituted for the criterion of whether taking the socialist road or the capitalist road" (p. 133).

The Li I-che poster offered a fascinating sociological critique of the effect on social life of "rule by rites" and excessive politicization. Because university admissions, Party and Youth League membership, job assignments and promotions—decisions of profound import for the lives of individuals—depended in large part on cadres' judgments of one's political character, people had to strive to prove their revolutionary zeal. Everyone wanted to avoid being labelled a "rightist" or "backward" and hoped to be regarded as a "leftist revolutionary." The constant problem was opportunism. How could cadres, from the local level to Peking, make wise labelling decisions if they could not sort out the genuine revolutionaries from the careerists? As political life degenerated into formalism, social life was warped by political competition."[22] The critics depicted people as "investing" or

[21] "Summary of Chairman Mao's Talks with Responsible Comrades at Various Places during his Provincial Tour," from the middle of August to 12 Sept. 1971, in Schram (ed.), *Chairman Mao Talks to the People*, pp. 290–99.

[22] For an analysis of the impact of political competition on social relations among Chinese students, see Susan L. Shirk, "Schoolcraft in China: Political Culture as Strategic Behavior" (submitted for publication). The short stories in Chen Jo-hsi's collection, *The Execution of Mayor Yin* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1978) offer many examples of people using political weapons in social conflict.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

" speculating " in politics, striving to show that they were more active or more left than others, in the hope that political recognition would earn them personal profit. The result was not only political hypocrisy, but social division, since proving revolutionary enthusiasm often entailed criticizing fellow-students or co-workers:

> The movements of this " good " and that " good " were, in fact, competitions of " left! left! and more left! " and contests for " the most . . . the most . . . and the most." The innumerable " meetings of representatives of active elements " were, in fact expositions of hypocritical, evil and ugly behavior and a gambling house which offered " 10,000 times profit for one unit of capital " (pp. 117–18).

The successful individuals were those who could " work the system " through their command of current political idiom. But for every individual who could take advantage of the " rule by rites," there were many others who were its victims. As the poster put it, " the lesson of the Cultural Revolution " was that without democracy and legality, " not only the revolution will fail to accomplish its missions but it will also be exploited by bourgeois careerists. The masses of people will get nothing but fetters " (p. 134).

THE Li I-che poster called for a " legal system, not the ' system of rites ' " (p. 141). The authors wanted to replace the arbitrary " rule by rites " with a fair and predictable socialist legal system which protected citizens from the abuses perpetrated by the political authorities. Paralleling the traditional debate between Confucianism and Legalism over whether the best guarantee of good government was the moral virtue of leaders or the law, the young critics of 1974 advocated reliance on law because they no longer had confidence in the rectitude of Party leaders. They asked how " the rights of the masses of people to struggle, under the Party's centralized leadership against the capitalist-roaders in the Party and their erroneous line [could] be protected," and answered that an institutionalized *process*—not just exhortation—was needed:

> It would be superfluous to say that the Party leadership should listen carefully to the opinions of the masses; it would be equally superfluous to mention the rights of the masses of people to exercise revolutionary supervision over Party leadership at various levels; and it would be more so to say that it is justified to rebel against the capitalist-roaders. Even if the opinions of the masses are erroneous and excessive; or, they are, out of their ignorance, discontent with certain aspects of the Party's policies, should they be " suppressed when persuasion fails, and apprehended when suppression fails "? Moreover, it is not always easy to distinguish between fragrant flowers and poisonous weeds, between the correct and the erroneous, and between the revolutionary and the

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> counterrevolutionary. There must be a process; and the distinction must be tested by time (p. 142).

Li Cheng-t'ien and his co-authors claimed that in calling for a socialist legal system they were merely advocating the return to legal democratic safeguards which were granted in the 1954 Constitution. Although they did not assert that such constitutional rights as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of association were thoroughly enforced even before the Cultural Revolution, they said that under Lin Piao the socialist legal system became "'inoperative,' while, on the other hand, 'the state power is the power to suppress' became operative." Alas, the Cultural Revolution not only failed to accomplish its task of "enabl[ing] the people to hold firmly in their hands the weapon of extensive people's democracy," but ironically, also led to some of the worst "miscarriages of justice" after the summer of 1968 (p. 133). The laws protecting civil rights existed in the Constitution, "but these protections have been, in fact, always unavailable, while, on the contrary, Fascist autocracy has been 'allowed' to be practiced over the revolutionary cadres and masses" (p. 145). What the poster asked is that the law be followed, by ordinary citizen and Party leader alike. "The ones who suppress the people must be suppressed" (p. 145) and the people's only protection from unfair, arbitrary leaders was the law. They advocated democratic supervision and an enforced legal system as the only remedies for a new Party ruling class, which employed revolutionary politics in an arbitrary, autocratic way to serve its own ends. They believed that socialist democracy and the legal system must be established in order to breathe new life into Chinese socialism.

THE Li I-che poster of 1974 was one clear voice of post-Cultural Revolution dissent, but what followed four years later was cacophony. Chinese citizens, first in Peking and then in other cities, proclaimed their views in wall posters, pamphlets, "Hyde Park Corner" speeches, and in conversations with foreigners; some critical essays were even published in the official press. While most of the broadsides and discussions dealt with the major themes of the earlier Li I-che poster, namely the degeneration of political life and the need for democracy and legality, people took the opportunity to consider other issues as well.

For example, some of the early posters of winter 1978 were primarily concerned with reversing the verdicts in top leadership conflicts. The critics sought revenge on the leaders who had suppressed them in earlier years, in particular during the April 1976 T'ien An Men incident, when a gathering to honour the Premier Chou En-lai turned into a violent *mêlée* with public security forces who had attempted to remove the memorial wreaths. Encouraged by the Teng administration's gradual

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reversal of verdicts on the incident itself—it was declared a revolutionary rather than counter-revolutionary event and the almost 400 participants who had been arrested were released—the poster-writers demanded that the leaders responsible for this miscarriage of justice be punished. But the matter of responsibility was not simple. The protesters were not satisfied with the dismissal of the Mayor of Peking, Wu Teh, who had summoned the police to T'ien An Men; they demanded that those leaders who *benefited* from the suppression of the demonstrators should also be punished. They pointed to Hua Kuo-feng, who was appointed Party Chairman by the Politburo soon after the incident in April 1976. The message was clear to foreign journalists, and for some days in November 1978, it appeared that the poster campaign was a clever device of Teng Hsiao-p'ing to eliminate Hua and claim the Party Chairmanship for himself. But Teng was unwilling to shatter his "coalition government" and endanger the prospects for orderly succession by taking revenge on Hua, even though Teng himself was the chief victim of the 1976 events (he was fired and politically disgraced then for the second time in 10 years). He was willing to demote Vice-Chairman Wang Tung-hsing, who had been charged in wall posters with trying to shield those responsible for the 1976 incident and with still "displaying superstition" (i.e. defending Mao's ideas) in "opposition to Teng Hsiao-p'ing."[23] But he defended and protected Hua Kuo-feng.

Intermingled with the attacks on individual leaders and the discussions of political issues were a multitude of individual complaints scrawled on scraps of paper. People sometimes came from many miles away (control over personal travel is quite loose in China) to make their grievances known. While many of these individual protest campaigns dealt with cases of unjustified political discrimination, others ranged from an old man's attempt to clear the good name of his son, who he claimed had been mistakenly convicted and executed for rape,[24] to a schoolboy's accusation of his teachers for following the "Gang of Four" because they insisted that he do his homework.[25]

Most of the 1978–79 expressions of dissent did, however, focus on the need to reform the Chinese political system. Like the authors of the Li I-che poster, these dissidents clearly had lost confidence in remedies such as those of the Cultural Revolution. They wanted less rather than more politicization of everyday life: a Hangchow poster pleaded for a "social life other than meetings."[26] They criticized the distribution of opportunities on the basis of political criteria as leading to phoney opportunism: one teacher complained about job

[23] *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 Nov. 1978.
[24] *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 Dec. 1978.
[25] *The Wall Street Journal*, 1 Dec. 1978.
[26] *The New York Times*, 27 Dec. 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

discrimination because he "failed to learn one thing well—how to brownnose." [27]

Instead they demanded more democracy and legality. As one dissident member of the Red Guard generation, who had come to Peking to represent an organization of youth (aged 27–34) called the "Democratic Forum" located in the isolated southwestern city of Kweiyang, explained to a foreign reporter, "Everyone in China knew that the Cultural Revolution was a period of fascist dictatorship. But at the time no one dared say it. Now we want real freedom, human rights and democracy." [28] Another pair of young critics argued that democracy and legality were essential to keep politicians accountable to the people:

> It has been proved in practice that once democracy is taken away, no one dares speak his mind and we are inundated and carried away by falsehoods, and big empty talk. Once that happens, no one expresses opinions any more and we are engulfed and corrupted by flattery. Wherever this happens the party organization is bound to drift away from its proletarian base and political power will be turned against the masses.

They demanded, therefore, "laws that are effectively enforced" and "the right of the people to elect, dismiss and supervise state, administrative and managerial personnel." [29]

The advocates of democracy did not agree, however, about what democracy meant. Although some dissidents insisted that China must have socialist, rather than bourgeois or capitalist, democracy, most of them were ready to criticize socialism and to embrace capitalist institutions. Posters expressed admiration for the economic achievements of the United States and Taiwan and wondered what political forms had made these achievements possible. One youth told an American journalist that he was open to any system so long as it worked: "Capitalism and socialism are just names—what is the real difference? The important thing is, we want happiness, freedom, and an advanced economy. Whichever system achieves that, that's what we want." [30] Another critic complained to a journalist that 30 years of socialism had not accomplished much in China: "These days we are always being told how much better socialism is than other systems. Tell me how socialism is better." [31] Judging from the contents of their posters, Marxism had exerted little influence over this third wave of dissidents—they were more likely to quote the Declaration of Independence than a Marxist theoretical essay. Chinese critics were not so much rejecting Marxism as being ignorant of it; few Chinese

[27] Ibid. The Chinese version of the poster probably used the expression "*p'ai ma-p'i*," which translates to "pat the horse's rump."
[28] *The New York Times*, 27 Nov. 1978.
[29] *Chinese Youth* (date not given), *Morning Star*, 21 Nov. 1978.
[30] *The New York Times*, 14 Jan. 1979.
[31] Agence France-Presse, *The Times*, 27 Nov. 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

receive any education in Marxist theory beyond that provided by Mao Tse-tung's writings.

They were also ignorant of the institutional arrangements on which non-socialist democracies are based. The primitive quality of their demands poignantly illustrates their lack of experience of democratic forms. When American columnist Robert Novak asked people at the "Wall of Democracy" what demands they wished him to pass on to Teng Hsiao-p'ing, they offered no proposals for institutional reform; they could suggest only visits from Teng to read their posters and greater access to foreigners who would communicate citizens' opinions to the Chinese leaders. In another encounter, a 30-year-old said that "freedom" meant being able "to speak freely without being afraid of being labeled counter revolutionary." [32]

People who wrote and read the posters in the winter of 1978–79 were divided by conflict over two other issues, what attitude to take toward the West and how to judge Mao Tse-tung.

Most Chinese citizens appeared to be swept away by a sudden enthusiasm for the West, the United States in particular. One poster simply printed the English word "LOVE", and underneath in Chinese, "We demand further broad contacts with America in all fields." [33] Like nineteenth century Chinese reformers who looked abroad for remedies to China's economic and technical backwardness, today's reformers are searching for models in the West. Some people are convinced that China must copy America. For example, one youth said to a journalist, "In the past, China tried to copy the Soviet Union, but that was mistaken and now we must learn from America. America is the most advanced industrial power in the world. We want to study America's science, its management and its political system too." [34] But, paralleling events of the nineteenth century, these cosmopolitan reformers may be confronted by a nationalist backlash. Anti-foreign sentiment recently reared its head when a dissident organization calling itself "The Human Rights Group" addressed a poster to President Carter asking him to take up the cause of human rights in China. Hostile readers wrote in the margin "shameful," "dirty," and "you don't deserve to be a Chinese." [35] Then the poster was torn down, replaced, and torn down again. Left on the wall was a rebuttal, which attacked the authors as "the dregs of the Chinese race, crawling at the feet of imperialism." [36]

Of course the most dramatic development of the winter of dissent—one which greatly surprised most foreign observers [37]—was the public

[32] *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 Nov. 1978.
[33] *The New York Times*, 31 Dec. 1978.
[34] Ibid.
[35] *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 Dec. 1978.
[36] *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 Dec. 1978.
[37] This suggests that Western observers of China may have been more awed by Mao Tse-tung than the Chinese themselves were.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

criticism of Mao Tse-tung by Chinese citizens. The first historic step was taken by Peking garage workers on 19 November 1978. They posted a broadside against the events of 1976 which had led to Teng Hsiao-p'ing's dismissal. One paragraph was underlined, apparently by readers: "Because Chairman Mao's thought was metaphysical in the last years of his life and for all sorts of other reasons, he supported the [gang of] four in getting rid of Teng Hsiao-p'ing." [38] Suddenly the taboo was shattered. Subsequent criticism of Mao was relatively subdued and dispassionate, almost reluctant, as if the dissidents cared more about the principle of being able to criticize Mao than actually criticizing him. One poster said, "Chairman Mao was a man, not a god. The time has come to give him his real place." [39] Some Hangchow dissidents wrote a poster which said, "Chairman Mao is our leader, but, after all, didn't he have his faults? Didn't his instructions contain mistakes?" [40] Some of Mao's critics were even anxious to find excuses for him. One poster said that Mao had made Lin Piao his successor during the Cultural Revolution only because the Chairman "had become muddled in his old age." [41] The backlash was much more vehement than the criticisms themselves. One poster said, "If these people who have been writing posters criticizing Mao will sign their names, then we will smash their dogs' heads." [42] The dissidents' response to the backlash was, however, even angrier: a Peking youth who shouted, "Those who attack Chairman Mao will come to no good end," was reported to have been beaten by the crowd.[43]

Who were the dissidents of 1978–79? Who wrote the wall posters and marched behind banners demanding democracy and human rights? Not all of the voices calling for democracy were those of people whom we would label intellectuals. Westerners often presume that in Third World countries like China only the intellectuals have the "luxury" of caring about democracy, while "the masses" worry about economic survival. This presumption has been challenged by recent events in China. Journalists reported that the crowds at recent demonstrations were made up largely of young workers. Although most of the participants were young (as one young dissident said, "We don't know whether older people feel like us. Some of them are afraid and keep their opinions secret." [44]) there was otherwise sufficient diversity to suggest that the notion of democracy has broad support in Chinese cities.

Even some peasants raised their voices, travelling to Peking to be

[38] Agence France-Presse, *The Times*, 20 Nov. 1978.
[39] *Newsweek*, 4 Dec. 1978.
[40] *The New York Times*, 27 Dec. 1978.
[41] *The New York Times*, 26 Nov. 1978; *International Herald Tribune*, 27 Nov. 1978.
[42] *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 Dec. 1978.
[43] *Newsweek*, 4 Dec. 1978.
[44] *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 Nov. 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

heard (mass protest is futile if it is ignored by the media; protests could erupt in the countryside without anyone in other provinces, or in other countries, learning about them). The focus of the peasants' posters and demonstrations was economic. They complained about rural poverty and hunger and seemed to believe that Teng's modernization and liberalization policies would not do anything to improve their livelihood.

It appeared, however, that the bulk of those participating in protest activities—and certainly most of the organizers—were members of the Red Guard generation. Many of the peasant protestors probably were not genuine peasants, but rather people sent down to the countryside during times of economic scarcity (1960–62) or city youth sent down as part of the rural resettlement programme. The generation of former Red Guards resettled after the Cultural Revolution were particularly prone to protest: they felt victimized by Chinese autocracy, were experienced in the art of protest, were eager to recapture the heady excitement of the Cultural Revolution, and—perhaps most important—would seize any opportunity to get out of the countryside and back to the city.

WHAT will be the future of political dissent in China? Will the new leadership be able to satisfy the dissidents' demands or will current policies generate more dissent? To address these questions we must first understand the reasons for Teng Hsiao-p'ing's efforts to loosen political constraints on Chinese citizens and the contradictions in his strategy.

Vice-Premier Teng has decided that the highest priority is the modernization of the Chinese economy. In his efforts to move the country towards that goal, he is confronted by two related dilemmas.

The first is how to open up China to Western technology and capital without creating political problems. Teng and Hua Kuo-feng have decided that it is a good thing for Chinese citizens to learn about the West; that familiarity with Western life is not a negative concomitant of importing technology and capital, but has its own positive effect. Personal contact with Westerners, whether on the dance-floor in Peking or on campuses in Boston (or second-hand, through the mass media), will demonstrate to the Chinese the advantages of an advanced economy, and will thereby heighten their motivation to work for modernization. As Hua put it, "Many of our comrades know hardly anything about the situation abroad. As soon as we make a little progress, we become conceited, living in a closed world. If we do not change this attitude, it will be impossible to speak of reaching advanced foreign levels." [45] But today's incentive may become tomorrow's source of frustration if the fruits of modernization take a long time to appear in China.

[45] *The New York Times*, 25 Dec. 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Moreover, once they have had a taste of Western culture, people may resent any political limitations on their access to it. Foreign films are a good example. Chinese television and cinemas have recently been allowed to show European and Japanese films. Passive enjoyment of these films—which offer more entertainment in one evening than anyone could find in the dreary 10 years of the Cultural Revolution—was not enough for one viewer who was moved to complain in a wall poster that the censors had cut "the shots of naked bodies, topless women and the zeal of love" from a Japanese film. He argued from principle: "Unless we eliminate puritanism, our literature and art cannot take a step forward and our country will remain forever in a state of feudalism." [46]

Beethoven concerts, exhibitions of Western computer technology, and foreign films are as likely to stimulate political questioning and demands for greater access to the West as to dampen dissent, and, at the same time, they may provoke an anti-foreign backlash among older traditionalist Chinese. For example, in the Japanese film incident, someone scrawled "an extremely poisonous snake" in the margin of the poster protesting against censorship.

The opening to the West will also increase social and economic differentiation in China, creating new distinctions, for example, between foreign educated and locally educated specialists, between employees at modern plants jointly owned with foreign companies and those at older locally owned plants, or between officials with technical knowledge and those who are technically illiterate. Some critics of Teng's strategy—including some high level cadres—have already begun to complain about new inequalities.[47] Those who feel that their social status and material position are declining in relation to others as a result of Teng's Western-oriented modernization strategy are likely to overlap with the cultural traditionalists—especially among the peasantry and those who speak on its behalf. Teng and his colleagues will have a difficult time accommodating these contradictory demands for more and less access to the West.

A similar dilemma facing Teng and his colleagues is that of how to satisfy popular discontent and raise work morale while maintaining political control. Teng is no liberal democrat; he is a Leninist who has built his entire career within the Communist Party and will not tamper with the basic structure of Party rule. Both Teng and Hua have decided that "one of the serious short-comings in the structure of economic management in our country is the overconcentration of authority, and it is necessary boldly to shift it under guidance from the leadership to lower levels so that the local authorities and industrial

[46] Reuters and Associated Press, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, date missing.

[47] Many of these complaints focus on new educational inequalities. See Susan L. Shirk, "Educational Reform and Political Backlash: Recent Changes in Chinese Educational Policy," *Comparative Education Review*, June 1979.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and agricultural enterprises will have greater power of decision in management under the guidance of unified state planning." [48] The devolution of economic authority means taking power away from Party organizations and giving it to local managers. But Teng hopes somehow to do this without weakening Party organization or the ability of the top leadership to enforce its policies ("socialist modernization requires centralized leadership" [49]).

The difficulty of improving morale while maintaining Party control is illustrated by the delicate balance which Teng has struck in his attitude toward Mao Tse-tung. There probably were several reasons for Teng's bold decision to permit public criticism of the late Chairman. He believed that people had serious questions about Mao's role especially during the 1966–76 period, and that if they were able to air their doubts they would feel happier and more committed to the regime. He also believed that modernization requires a flexibility in reasoning and attitudes, and that people's uncritical obedience to authority had impeded Chinese development. In addition, he was motivated by practical political considerations: he had to find a way to defend his plans for modernization against his critics. Therefore he deprived these critics of their most potent weapon, the words of Mao Tse-tung. By refuting the "every sentence [of Mao's] is truth" [50] "fallacy" and arguing that "practice [rather than Mao's word] is the sole criterion of truth," [51] Teng made it more difficult for critics to attack his programmes with Maoist slogans.

Although he certainly must have resented the way Mao had treated him, Teng continues to maintain a respectful attitude toward the late leader and to restrain dissidents from harsh criticisms of him. Teng's response to the first wall posters attacking Mao was that they were incorrect in assessing Mao at 70 per cent good and 30 per cent bad (the same proportions usually assigned to Stalin); he was better than that, Teng said. Teng went on to say that "every Chinese knows that without Chairman Mao there would have been no new China." [52] Party communiqués argued that "it would not be Marxist to expect a revolutionary leader to be free of all shortcomings." [53] And Teng was able to make a reasonable case that as a leader who was not bound by Marxist dogma but who pragmatically applied Marxism to the realities of the Chinese situation, Mao would want his ideas to be questioned and refined.

The subtleties of this position may, however, be lost on most Chinese citizens, and Teng may be unable to keep the criticism of

[48] *The New York Times*, 26 Dec. 1978.
[49] Ibid.
[50] For example, *Hsinhua*, 2 Sept. 1978, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report, People's Republic of China (hereafter abbreviated as FBIS), 5 Sept. 1978, E4-7.
[51] *Liberation Army Daily* and *People's Daily*, 24 June 1978, FBIS, 27 June 1978, E8-24.
[52] Agence France-Presse, *The Times*, 28 Nov. 1978.
[53] *The New York Times*, 27 Dec. 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mao within bounds. Even more, by breaking the taboo and exposing the issue of Mao's role to public debate, Teng may find that he has created for himself new problems of political control. In the Soviet Union, what began as sanctioned criticism during de-Stalinization soon crossed the divide to more fundamental questioning of the communist system. In China the result may be even more dramatic because many of those participating in "de-Maoification" have previously been mobilized and taught to challenge Party authority in the Cultural Revolution.

Teng's problems in raising morale while maintaining control also explain the manner in which he has approached democratization. One may conjecture that Teng initiated a campaign to demonstrate his commitment to democracy, freedom of expression and legality because he believed these notions to have widespread support among the population. He perceived that his modernization programme was jeopardized because many citizens were dissatisfied and work productivity was low.[54] The democratization campaign and the "blooming and contending" of critical opinions would permit people to release their resentments (as Teng commented about the "wall of democracy," "If the masses feel some anger, we must let them express it"[55]): assuage their discontents ("create liveliness and ease of mind"[56]); and improve their work motivation ("Only by guaranteeing the workers' democratic rights as master of the country can we whip up the enthusiasm of the broad masses of workers"[57]). At the same time, Teng hoped that these moves would strengthen people's commitment to him and his policies.

Not all Party leaders agreed with Teng. The Vice-Premier has had to fight hard to defend the democratization campaign in top leadership circles. One newspaper editorial described the opposition: "Some comrades, when they see people putting up wall posters, raising opinions about the leadership, or seeing that some of the posters raise improper questions, dismiss these methods as detrimental to stability and unity. This is entirely wrong."[58] Teng has responded to his critics by quoting Mao's opaque formulations on the interdependence of democracy and centralism—for example, "Without a high degree of democracy we cannot have a high degree of centralism; without a high degree of centralism we cannot establish a socialist economy."[59] He has also argued that the modernization programme depends on the "enthusiasm of the entire population,"[60] which, in

[54] According to economist Hu Chiao-mu, President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, since 1958, all increases in industrial labour productivity were due to increases in the number of workers (*People's Daily*, 6 Oct. 1978, FBIS, 11 Oct. 1978, E11).
[55] *The Financial Times*, 29 Nov. 1978.
[56] *The Daily Telegraph*, 28 Nov. 1978.
[57] *Red Flag*, No. 11 (1978), FBIS, 16 Nov. 1978, E12.
[58] *The New York Times*, 4 Jan. 1979.
[59] *Red Flag*, No. 11 (1978), FBIS, 16 Nov. 1978, E13.
[60] *The New York Times*, 4 Jan. 1979.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

turn, can only be assured by satisfying the public's demand for greater democracy. Teng has devised still another, convoluted argument to defend his campaign. He urges his colleagues to heed the "important historical lesson" of the Stalin era in Russia: due to Stalin's abuses and his failure to exonerate the falsely accused, there was great "discontent and indignation" among both Party members and the masses; Khrushchev was able to take advantage of this unhappiness and use the issue to stir up trouble and attack the socialist system. Similarly, the people falsely accused by the "Gang of Four" must be rehabilitated in order that people's minds may be eased and their energies concentrated on the Four Modernizations; if this is not done a careerist cast in the mould of Khrushchev could exploit the issue to stir resentment in the future.[61] In fact, it is argued, "It was because we didn't fully promote democracy that Lin Piao and the Gang of Four were able to attract support."[62]

While on the one hand, Teng is trying to convince the Party elite that expanded democracy and freedom of political expression are required for modernization and are politically prudent, on the other hand he is busy persuading young dissidents to keep their protest activities within bounds. Articles pointing out that the "struggle [for democracy] must be guided by the Communist Party so as to avoid deviations toward ultra-democracy and anarchism"[63] are designed not only to reassure Party cadres but also to warn protesters that their activities should not degenerate into anarchy. While wall posters continued to be officially tolerated, the word went out that marches and demonstrations should be discouraged. Teng's argument—which has been addressed primarily to young people—is that while "blooming and contending" are good, they must not threaten the "stability and unity" required to achieve modernization. As one newspaper editorial said about youth, "All their statements and actions should benefit stability and unity. They should never make any statement or take any action endangering stability and unity," which are prerequisites for the Four Modernizations.[64] This emphasis on social order does not just reflect Teng's concern for maintaining Party control and preventing such political disruptions of production as occurred during the 1966–76 period. Teng has a new, additional worry, namely that foreign businessmen might be reluctant to make deals with the Chinese if the investment climate in China appears unstable.

A democratization campaign designed to attain both "liveliness and ease of mind" and "stability and order" is unlikely to satisfy political dissidents like Li Cheng-t'ien and those who followed in his footsteps in 1978–79. Vice-Premier Teng and his allies have, however, taken

[61] *People's Daily*, 20 Nov. 1978, FBIS, 20 Nov. 1978, E22–25.
[62] *People's Daily*, 19 Dec. 1978, FBIS, 29 Dec. 1978, E30.
[63] New China News Agency, 21 Dec. 1978, FBIS, 21 Dec. 1978, E7.
[64] *Chinese Youth Journal*, 2 Dec. 1978, FBIS, 4 Dec. 1978, E6.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some significant steps which must please dissidents as well as other citizens. They have instituted elections for rural production team cadres (not a new practice but one which in the past was often obstructed by upper level cadres) and elections in factories and other work units for shift leaders and workshop foremen. The 1978 Constitution requires that representatives to local, provincial, and national people's congresses—which are large, powerless bodies—be elected, a requirement which was also included in previous versions of the Constitution. Teng has rehabilitated many victims of previous campaigns, including those labelled " rightists " in 1957, pre-1949 capitalists stripped of their assets in 1966, Red Guards from losing factions during the Cultural Revolution, and the 388 demonstrators who were arrested during the 1976 T'ien An Men incident. Teng has attacked the Gang of Four for some of the same abuses criticized by recent dissidents, i.e. " empty political talk," " labelling the people at will," and creating a climate conducive to political opportunism.[65] And he has put the Party on record in support of the " principle of three nots: not seizing on others' faults, not putting labels on people and not using the big stick." [66] During winter 1978–79, Teng demonstrated his willingness to tolerate the public expression of critical opinions—even criticism of Mao—in wall posters. In addition he has revived the practice of sending letters to public officials and newspapers. Officials are supposed to spend one day every month or every week receiving visitors or attending to correspondence from citizens. Anonymous denunciations of cadres are permitted, and cadres are reminded that those who criticize officials must have their rights protected: " Anyone who suppresses criticism or retaliates against the persons involved should be seriously dealt with." [67]

While these expressions of good intention—especially when combined with policies to improve living standards and allow greater cultural and scientific freedom—no doubt please many Chinese citizens, they do not go far enough to satisfy the demands of critics like the authors of the Li I-che poster and the 1978–79 protesters. When it comes to democracy, exhortations are no substitute for institutions. Audiences once a month with officials, anonymous letters and wall posters are very primitive forms of democratic oversight. For many years Mao Tse-tung urged citizens to speak up and cadres to listen to them, but without institutionalized guarantees it was not in their interests to act this way. Cadres naturally prefer flattering followers to " trouble-makers " who are critical of leadership decisions; and since cadres play the major role in work assignments, promotions, and

[65] *People's Daily*, 14 Nov. 1977, in *China News Analysis*, No. 1101, 2 Dec. 1977; " Great Historic Victory "; New China News Agency, 13 Dec. 1976, *Survey of China Mainland Press*, No. 6244.

[66] *The New York Times*, 26 Dec. 1978.

[67] *Peking Review*, No. 26 (30 June 1978).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

distribution of rewards, it is in citizens' own interest to keep the cadres happy.

Although the new Constitution has been promulgated with fanfares about the expansion of democracy, in fact the charter's statement of citizens' rights shows no advance over that in the 1975 Constitution, and several articles could strengthen the dictatorial powers of the state. Both documents guarantee freedom of speech, correspondence, the press, assembly, association, and procession, the right to demonstrate, strike, believe or disbelieve in religion or to propagate atheism, to make wall posters, to lodge complaints, and to appeal to the organs of state should such rights be infringed. The 1978 Constitution does not restore the freedom of residence and change of domicile which had been included in the 1954 version. Today, as before, there is no assurance that citizens' rights will be enforced. Despite the current emphasis on democracy the 1978 Constitution adds both a new stipulation to the list of citizens' duties, "Citizens must support the leadership of the Communist Party in China," and a new category of "new-born bourgeois elements" to the list of those who must be suppressed. Thus it is still possible that those who take advantage of their rights to demand reforms will be labelled anti-Party reactionary elements and stripped of all rights. What the Chinese recently had to say about the 1977 Soviet Constitution is just as applicable to the 1978 Chinese Constitution: "The text of the Constitution proclaims rights and freedoms of every kind for citizens; but it immediately adds: 'Citizens cannot use their rights and freedoms if this would infringe the interests of Socialism or the State,' words serving to oppress the many exploited people who resist the new Tsars." [68]

Another indication that the rules of politics have not been sufficiently transformed to satisfy citizen critics is the manner in which the Teng regime has established itself and struggled against the followers of the "Gang of Four." Although they claim to find "empty politics" and "labelling people at will" very distasteful, Teng and his allies have attacked the Gang and its followers with hyperbole equal to that heard during the Cultural Revolution. The style of political discourse remains personal, Manichean, and likely to strain the credulity of the public. Despite their denunciations of the "feudal autocracy" promoted by the "Gang of Four," those in power now are trying to shore up their legitimacy by promoting a leadership cult of Chairman Hua Kuo-feng. While the cult of Mao Tse-tung, the leader of the revolution and father of New China, was accepted by many as natural, a cult of the little-known Hua Kuo-feng seems contrived and is likely to draw censure.

A key element in Teng's democratization campaign is the strengthening of the legal order, because this is one area where it may be possible

[68] *People's Daily*, 13 June 1977, *China News Analysis*, No. 1114, 24 Mar. 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to satisfy the public, maintain political control, and even enhance the climate for foreign investment at the same time. The new Constitution re-establishes the office of the procurator (the public prosecutor) which had been included in the 1954 Constitution but eliminated in the 1975 version. The right to defence and public trial which had been stipulated in the 1954 Constitution have also been restored. Newspaper articles have announced the leadership's plan to compile criminal and civil codes, as well as to publish collections of judicial opinions.[69]

The strengthening of the legal order is a two-edged sword: it can lead to greater fairness and predictability, but it can also strengthen state control over citizens. The example of the Soviet Union demonstrates how the tools of law can be employed to repress, and recent Chinese editorials remind us that the legal organs established in the new Constitution can be put to similar use: "Public security organs, prosecutors' offices and people's courts are important tools of proletarian dictatorship."[70] Moreover, "Party justice" will apparently continue to function as a separate system in which individuals—mainly Party members—who commit political crimes are judged and punished. For example, most cases of cadre corruption are handled by the Party rather than by the courts,[71] and the "Gang of Four's" case is being dealt with by the Party because it is an "anti-Party" rather than a criminal case.[72] While, in the short term, citizens may applaud Teng for reviving legality, as time goes on they are likely to question the manner in which he puts legal weapons to use. And as legal norms become stronger in China, there will be growing objections to a position for the Party which is separate and apart from the law.

DISSATISFACTION, demand-making, and dissent cannot be equated. A dissatisfied person may have no way to articulate demands. And not all demand-makers become dissenters. People who make material demands may be staunch supporters of the regime or be unwilling to risk criticizing it. In a country like China where the risks of expressing dissident views are so grave, only a small proportion of dissatisfaction is ever likely to become political dissent.

Teng Hsiao-p'ing's recent policy initiatives—his ambitious modernization programme, the opening up to the West, and his democratization programme—were largely designed to assuage the dissatisfactions of the Chinese populace and thereby win their support and loyalty. Undoubtedly these moves are very popular, and most people—at least in the cities—are happier. But the policies will generate more pressure on the regime—both more demands and more dissent—and more problems for Teng in the long term.

[69] *People's Daily*, 16 Mar. 1978, *China News Analysis*, No. 1116, 14 Apr. 1978; *Peking Review*, No. 32 (11 Aug. 1978); *The New York Times*, 26 Dec. 1978.
[70] *People's Daily*, 3 May 1977, *China News Analysis*, No. 1123, 16 June 1978.
[71] *China News Analysis*, No. 1121, 2 June 1978.
[72] *The New York Times*, 15 Jan. 1979.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For example, the modernization programme will lead to increased quiescence but it will also generate new demands. Certainly, Chinese city dwellers are pleased with the wage increases, bonuses, consumer goods, and entertainment which Teng has offered them. With material abundance may come increasing concern with private affairs: some potential protesters may abandon political activities, choosing instead to invest all their time and energy in their careers and families; and with a greater variety of entertainment available, political protest will no longer be the most interesting show in town. One author of a recent wall poster urged people to remain at home and cultivate their own gardens rather than "blooming and contending" in the public arena: "I advise you not to make trouble. You should save up and buy a television set. Then, after you have had a meal and some tea, you can listen to songs and see the Japanese film Wan Hsiang" (about the life of a young girl forced to become a prositute, see p. 103).[73]

But not everyone will stay at home. Teng's promises have raised everyone's expectations, and not all these expectations can possibly be satisfied by even the most successful modernization programme. When this becomes apparent, both those groups who feel frustrated by slow gains and those who feel their relative position to be declining, will demand a larger share. They will of course speak in the name of Maoist egalitarian values rather than in their own self-interest. But whereas in the past overt, public demand-making was not considered legitimate, Teng's democratization programme has changed the political rules and made it possible for groups to engage in protest politics to improve their material condition. This has already begun, with wall posters complaining that recent wage increases discriminated against middle-aged and elderly workers,[74] with strikes in Shanghai,[75] and with marches by youths resettled in the countryside who demanded to return to the city "on the pretext of giving full scope to democracy."[76]

In a similar fashion, the opening up of China to the West will produce new demands on the leadership, both from those who desire even greater access to the West and from those who oppose the "pollution" of traditional Chinese culture.

Although Teng's moves to democratize political life undoubtedly have widespread support in China, they are also likely to generate more dissent in the future. Because the Vice-Premier feels that he must simultaneously assuage popular discontent and maintain Party control, he will be unable to move far enough in the direction of democracy to appease his political critics. He will be constrained by Party

[73] *Morning Star*, 13 Dec. 1978.
[74] Kyodo, 21 Dec. 1978, FBIS, 21 Dec. 1978, E12.
[75] *Le Monde*, 1 Jan. 1979.
[76] *Liberation Daily*, 16 Dec. 1978, FBIS, 20 Dec. 1978, G4.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leaders who view wall posters and protest activities as an affront to Party dignity and a threat to social order.

The Red Guard generation, which has little to lose by risking dissent, will continue to push Teng. Wall posters have already appeared which attack the Vice-Premier for timidity and hypocrisy. They complain that Teng has not permitted a thorough re-evaluation of Mao Tse-tung's role. One dissident wrote, "Teng should come here and read these wall posters instead of apologising for Chairman Mao's mistakes." [77] Another chided Teng for "telling us we should not say bad things about Chairman Mao," and insisted on taking the criticism of Mao beyond the limits set by Teng—"There is no use evaluating Mao according to a certain percentage. We must realize that if it were not for Mao's own despotism, China would not be in the state it is today." [78] He accuses Teng of using "stability and unity" and the Four Modernizations as a ploy to suppress the democratic movement:

> By talking about unity and stability they are urging us on like old yellow oxen to continue the revolution and reap our reward in the end. . . . We have been toughened in the cultural revolution and we are no longer stupid. . . . We do not want to be the tools of the expansionist and ambitious despots to achieve modernisation. We want a modernisation of people's lives and people's democracy. Only then can we live happily. If we do not have this fifth 'modernisation,' the four other modernisations are no more than a new fraud.[79]

By permitting demonstrations and wall posters during the winter of 1978–79, Teng may have inadvertently strengthened the dissident organizations of former Red Guards. Many of these political veterans had been dispersed in the countryside and probably had lost touch with one another. During the period of "blooming and contending" they were reminded how many others shared their critical perspective, and were able to re-establish old groups and create new ones. By January 1979, dissident groups were well-enough institutionalized to print and sell pamphlets, a form of protest requiring more coordination than does writing a wall poster.

These veterans will probably be joined by new first-time dissidents who were mobilized during the winter of 1978–79 when criticism was tolerated. Some of those who made demands—for example for material improvement or unrestricted access to foreign culture—would feel betrayed and become political dissidents if the leadership decided to suppress wall posters once again. The leadership, by first expanding and then contracting the boundaries of legitimate political expression, would thereby create more dissidents. The most likely new recruits are not young people now at school, who would be politically

[77] *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 Dec. 1978.
[78] *The Daily Telegraph*, 17 Dec. 1978.
[79] Ibid.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

timid lest they jeopardize their futures, but those who have left school and have already lost the competition for higher education. Today many more children have access to primary and secondary education, but there has been only a slow expansion of university education and urban jobs. Therefore the pyramid of opportunity is steeper than ever, and the "losers" are very disgruntled. Because they have been reared under communism, young people are more ideologically articulate than their elders and more likely to express frustration in political argument.

Furthermore, "de-Maoification" is severely weakening the moral legitimacy of central political authority in China. The Teng leadership will base its claims to legitimacy on the promise of modernization and improved living standards, but it will be impossible to satisfy the raised expectations of every sector and group. By permitting a critical re-examination of Mao's ideas, Teng has deprived not just his critics but also himself of a powerful weapon: quoting Mao's words in defence of his actions will no longer be as persuasive as it once was. In the past, Mao's personal stature inhibited fundamental questioning of the political system. If citizens found shifts in policy or labels confusing, they could always be reassured that if Mao condoned them, they must be correct. Now, just when people have lost their political compass, the political universe is likely to become more perplexing than ever. With Mao no longer present to set the record straight, political rhetoric may seem more self-serving and arbitrary, and people will be more likely to question the statements of central Party officials.

The opening up of China to foreign businessmen, students, tourists, and journalists will not only stimulate political questioning but will also make Chinese dissent more visible. The dissidents of 1978–79 learned quickly how to use the Western press to publicize their cause. As time goes on, the number of foreign reporters will multiply, and Chinese dissidents will become even more adept at taking advantage of their presence.

Because Teng Hsiao-p'ing now has a political stake in appearing to tolerate criticism and enhance democracy, he will not want to use conspicuously heavy-handed methods to deal with dissent. Rather than label protest leaders "counter-revolutionaries" or throw them in prison, he is more likely to use covert means to counter dissent. For example, officially written posters disguised as the work of dissidents ("China will declare to the world that China from the center to the grass roots is stable and united."[80]) have already appeared on the "wall of democracy" to challenge those of actual dissidents. In order to maintain his democratic public image Teng may also be forced to increase the use of secret police methods to infiltrate dissident organizations or organize rival groups. If such tactics were revealed, they

[80] *The New York Times*, 27 Nov. 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could intensify the alienation of Chinese dissidents from their government.

China may come to resemble the Soviet Union more than in the past: expanded access to the West, decreased legitimacy of leadership, and greater reliance on police surveillance. Therefore, despite Teng Hsiao-p'ing's efforts to proclaim the regime's commitment to democracy and legality, the Chinese dissident movement may come to resemble the movement in the Soviet Union which is small, vocal, and of great international significance. In a few years the Chinese leadership may be forced to deal with a Chinese Sakharov, who has the support not only of Western intellectuals, but even of the President of the United States, and pro-Chinese parties and states may have to confront the human rights issue in China just as the European Communist parties have had to grapple with the issue of Soviet repression.

One respect in which the Soviet Union and China differ—the legitimacy of anti-party criticism—would lead one to predict more dissent in China than in Russia. Although Mao Tse-tung's reputation is now tarnished, his legacy of anti-authoritarianism will continue to be felt. Whereas Soviet dissidents must reach back to Marx, to non-Marxist theorists, or to religion in order to justify their rebellion, Chinese critics will be able to use Mao's words to defend themselves and, perhaps more important, to bolster their moral self-confidence. Even after Teng Hsiao-p'ing's initiatives, there will be some Chinese citizens—especially those from the Red Guard generation—who will find that the actual workings of the political system do not conform with political rhetoric, and who will, as Mao once urged them to do, dare to "go against the tide."

☆ ☆ ☆

SINCE this article was completed, events in China have, unfortunately, confirmed many of its predictions. The contradictions in Teng Hsiao-p'ing's strategy are becoming increasingly clear. Vice-Premier Teng's drive to expand contacts with the West and permit open expression of public opinion, while at the same time maintaining Communist Party control, has run into trouble.

By opening up China to the West, Teng has set off an anti-foreign backlash. Recent newspaper editorials have denounced Chinese citizens who discuss politics with foreigners as "traitors who sell national secrets and harm the national interest." Articles assert that what lies behind the fascination with foreign things are "servile attitudes [which] seriously damage national self-respect." In response to this anti-foreign sentiment, Vice-Premier Teng has warned people not to divulge secrets to foreigners and has cracked down on fraternization with foreigners. Today there is less dancing and street-corner conversation with foreign visitors, and dissidents have been forced to deliver their essays secretly to foreign journalists in Peking.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The democratization campaign has also been abruptly ended in a manner reminiscent of the brief Hundred Flowers campaign of 1957. Apparently, high-level Party officials, including Teng himself, were appalled by the lack of commitment to Marxism and the socialist system revealed in the wall posters and demonstrations of the past winter. In March Teng made a tough speech to Party officials which advocated strict limitations on public expressions of opinion in order to avoid bourgeois democracy or anarchism. At the end of March, local officials in Shanghai, Peking, and other cities promulgated restrictions on wall posters (they are permitted only inside factories, offices and schools in Shanghai, and only at one location, the Wall of Democracy, in Peking). The Peking regulations ban slogans, rallies, posters, books, periodicals, and photographs which " oppose socialism [or are] against the proletarian dictatorship, against the leadership of the Communist Party, against Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse-tung thought," which divulge state secrets, or which violate the constitution or the law. Newspapers warned that those who violated the rules faced " physical labor, education, and discipline." Since that time wall posters have been torn down and perhaps as many as 40 dissidents arrested. At the same time that foreign and domestic pressures led the Party leadership to release from prison the authors of the Li I-che poster (their case could be blamed on the Gang of Four and its followers in Canton), other dissident members of the Red Guard generation (such as Wei Ching-sheng, Jen Wan-ting, and Fu Yueh-hua) have been arrested and charged as counter-revolutionaries for their activities during the winter of 1978–79.

Having once opened the gates and let the waters of popular sentiment flow, it is now all the more difficult to contain them again. The dissident organizations revived or established during the " blooming and contending " of December and January have not disbanded and continue to publish their newspapers and pamphlets (although now they have to be distributed surreptitiously). Political critics continue to put up wall posters and call mass meetings in Shanghai in a direct challenge to local authorities. The target of recent dissident publications and posters is Teng's repression of democracy and his increasing reliance on the security police. With a growing number of foreign journalists, scholars, business people, and other visitors in China, it is impossible for Teng to prevent these complaints from being publicized abroad.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ABSEES

SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN ECONOMICS ABSTRACTING SERIES
with supporting documentation and incorporating CREES Soviet Press Abstracts

Director: Michael Kaser, St. Antony's College, Oxford

Edited and published every four months on behalf of the
National Association of Soviet and East European Studies (NASEES)
with the co-operation of the Birmingham University Centre for Russian and East European Studies — incorporating *CREES Soviet Press Abstracts* and contributions from official bodies including the East European Trade Centre (EETC)

NOW PUBLISHED:

ABSEES Vol. VIII, No. 1 (53), September 1977 . . . and continuation in the MODERN NEW FORM — A printed journal with microfiches.

EACH ISSUE IN THE NEW SERIES COMPRISES:-
Coverage of *9 countries* by *c.450 abstracts* in *100 pages;* A5 size in stiff paper covers with 9 bound-in microfiches containing a total of *800 pages with 71,600 words* of English language abstracts commissioned specially for the issue from East European newspapers and journals. Included in this are 300pp of translated and original texts. Entries are arranged by country, but a printed cumulative subject index links all of the material.

ONE THIRD OF THE WORLD'S INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT FROM THE ECONOMIES OF EASTERN EUROPE

ABSEES for CURRENT ANALYSIS AND ARCHIVAL REFERENCE

First published 1970
Volume VIII, No. 1., (53), September 1977
Frequency: September, January, May
Annual Subscription
Inland: £52.00 + VAT
Overseas (airmail): $110.00
ISSN 0044-5622

Details of backfiles on microfilm and microfiches and regional selections as well as specimen copies are available from O.M.P. on request.

OXFORD MICROFORM PUBLICATIONS LTD

19a Paradise Street
Oxford OX1 1LD
Telephone (0865) 46252 Telex 83147

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Law and Heaven: The Evolution of Chinese Totalitarianism

Peter R. Moody

IN the last set of conversations with Edgar Snow, Mao Tse-tung compared himself to a "lonely monk walking with a leaky umbrella." Despite what some westerners seem to think, this was not Mao's way of symbolizing his efforts and desire, despite adversity, to do his little part in making this a better world for us all to live in. Rather, Mao was having a joke. A monk with an umbrella—*ho-shan ta san*—is part of a riddle-proverb. The rest of it runs: *wu fa wu t'ien*—no hair (monks shave their heads) and no sky (the sky being covered by an umbrella). *Fa*, hair, is pronounced in the same way as the word for law; and *t'ien*, sky, also means heaven, or the moral order. The monk with an umbrella is one who fears neither God nor man, who recognizes no restraint whatsoever upon his behaviour. Mao was not comparing himself to a lovable old hermit padding along in the rain, but to a Nietzschean superman.

This notion of "no law and no heaven" provides a way of understanding the dynamics of the puzzling phenomenon of revolutionary totalitarianism.[1] What the critics call the "totalitarian model" no longer enjoys even the limited fashion it once had. It is held to be incoherent, an ideological construct, a product (in its academically popular version) of the Cold War.[2] There is a great deal to this criticism, although the historical circumstances of the formulation of the concept and the uses to which it is put are not strictly relevant to the issue of its validity. The incoherence of the concept is relevant, however. The scholars who developed the concept of totalitarianism may

[1] The seminal analyses of the concept are Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (2nd enlarged edition, New York, 1958), and Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (2nd edition, Harvard University Press, 1965). For more recent analyses, see Hans Buchheim, *Totalitarian Rule: Its Nature and Consequences* (Wesleyan University Press, 1968) and Leonard Schapiro, *Totalitarianism* (New York, 1972).

For a 1974 attack by Chinese dissidents on the notion of ruling without law or heaven, see Li I-che, "On Socialist Democracy and Legality," *Chung-kung Yen-chiu*, 107 (November, 1975), pp. 116–131, p. 125.

The bulk of the present analysis concerns itself with *revolutionary totalitarianism*. This is what has in the past simply been called *totalitarianism*, and in this essay I follow that convention. I argue that this form of totalitarianism may be passing away in China, but fear that the west may be developing a non-revolutionary totalitarianism, and that China may be in transit to this new kind of totalitarianism as well.

[2] The best critique of the concept is, I think, the contribution by Benjamin Barber in Barber, Michael Curtis, and Carl J. Friedrich, *Totalitarianism in Perspective: Three Views* (New York, 1969).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not have intended it to be a "model" in precisely the same sense as, say, those paradigms whereby students are introduced to micro-economics; but in any case the concept does not provide a model.

This does not mean, however, that the concept lacks objective content. The concept is incoherent because the phenomena it describes are incoherent—self contradictory—although none the less real for all that. Totalitarian rule is rule with regard for neither law nor heaven. It is rule without restraint: and already we hit upon at least a verbal contradiction, since rule entails restraint.

The totalitarian mode of thought is a variety of the modern mode of political thought, with closer affinities to, say, liberalism than to the traditional forms of autocracy.[3] Liberalism, too, is a kind of "no law and no heaven" ideology: we are not bound by convention or by any natural moral order; society is a human artifact which humans may shape according to their desires. We are not properly subject to any norms except those we subject ourselves to.[4] It is no accident, as they say, that "liberation" should be a favourite totalitarian term, nor that the more totalitarian strain of Chinese communism, Maoism, contains a strong libertarian element: in 1967 the Red Guards proclaimed that rebellion is justified, and in 1973 Wang Hung-wen, the boy wonder of the Gang of Four, called on all good comrades to have the courage to oppose the tide, to defy the crime and error of those with power.

While liberalism in the abstract is morally nihilistic, a liberal regime probably cannot be morally nihilistic in practice and remain liberal. Successful liberal regimes have developed institutions which channel and regulate the unceasing conflict inherent in the liberal vision of society.[5] A liberal regime may not need heaven, but it does need law: there must be rules of the game the various competitors are forced to accept. Totalitarianism takes some of the premises of liberalism to their logical conclusion and makes no concession to law; totalitarian politics is struggle without institutions permitting struggle.

A totalitarian regime is an explicitly ideological regime, but the ideology does not constitute a set of values which regulate the way the regime uses power. Rather, the ideology itself will tend to be antinomian, voluntaristic.[6] The ideology may have some purportedly scientific content, but it will also have to be sufficiently flexible to ensure that whatever in fact does happen can be shown to be in accord with the

[3] Cf. J. L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (New York, 1970).

[4] That is, liberalism entails a denial of objective value—of heaven, if not of law (but in denying heaven it denies the rational foundation of law). Roberto Unger, *Knowledge and Politics* (New York, 1975), p. 76.

Liberalism, like totalitarianism, contains its own antinomies—for example, the contradiction between popular sovereignty and individual liberty. Jacques Ellul, *Histoire des institutions*, Vol. 5 (Paris, 1969). pp. 340, 345.

[5] Ralf Dahrendorf, *Essays in the Theory of Sociology* (Stanford University Press, 1968), p. 255.

[6] See A. James Gregor, *The Fascist Persuasion in Radical Politics* (Princeton University Press, 1974); Frederick Wakeman, *History and Will: Philosophical Perspectives on Mao Tse-tung's Thought* (University of California Press, 1973).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ideology. As a scientific statement the ideology will purport to describe the laws according to which society develops; in practice, at its best the ideology will become a guide whereby those in power make society develop in the way the abstract ideology predicts. The ideology serves to legitimize whatever those who have power choose to do—but their power will include the power to define the content of the ideology. But the ideology can serve to legitimize power only because it has a certain content . . . Totalitarian politics is a snake swallowing its own tail.

The "radical mind" is said to be characterized by an "uncompromising denial and rejection of existing reality." [7] This is another way of expressing the idea of no law and no heaven. The revolutionary totalitarian regime desires to reshape the society it rules, to transform existing reality. To do this it requires total power (and, if successful, obtains close to what it requires). But having near total power the regime itself must constitute an enormous chunk of existing reality.

Given such antinomies, it is perhaps more appropriate to see totalitarianism as a style of thought than as a set of institutions. This style of thought, however, has institutional consequences when those who embody the style dominate a particular regime and attempt to use their power to carry out their ideas. Because their ideas are necessarily contradictory, the attempt to carry them out must fail. But this failure in turn has consequences for the totalitarian style of politics.

The typical totalitarian institution (if, for the sake of simplicity we may speak of totalitarian institutions) is the revolutionary vanguard party. This is the instrument whereby the rulers dominate the other social and political institutions. The trouble is, the party itself *is* an institution, a bureaucracy—it must become one in order to endure. But to the extent that the party becomes institutionalized to that extent it must begin to conform to at least a functional equivalent of law—and to that extent it must cease to be totalitarian. Some kinds of totalitarianism may be compatible with bureaucracy, but revolutionary totalitarianism, at least, "is inherently incompatible with bureaucratic routine or legal order, for it demands the perpetual movement of permanent revolution." [8] But as an institution, the party itself—that is, those persons who hold power within the party and because of it—acquires a vested interest in existing reality, in its own power and privilege.

Totalitarian regimes have, in fact, been most totalitarian in practice when dominated not by the institutional party but by a single leader—for it is the individual person who dominates all others around him who can most nearly approach the condition of no law and no heaven. Thus it is said that the "'totalitarian' regime is essentially a leader-

[7] Robert C. Tucker, *The Marxian Revolutionary Idea* (New York, 1969), p. 182.

[8] Clement H. Moore and Samuel P. Huntington, *Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society: The Dynamics of Established One-Party Systems* (New York, 1970), p. 57.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ship regime." [9] But even the single leader will have to rule—if he is going to rule—through bureaucracies and institutions. A situation of mutual dependence is created: the leader is powerless without the institutions, and the institutions directionless without the leader.[10] But along with mutual dependence comes conflict: those in power in the institutions acquire vested interests, and these interests serve to limit the scope of the power of the leader, who therefore has an interest (so to speak) in weakening the scope of institutions, just as those in power in the institutions have an interest in limiting the scope and power of the leader.[11] In a totalitarian regime this "contradiction" will manifest itself most keenly between the supreme leader and the party institution, since these represent alternative foci of legitimacy.[12] At the height of totalitarianism—say, the Soviet Union from around 1934 until Stalin's death—the dictator manages to reduce the party institution to impotence.

If the leader crushes the party, however, he must turn to other institutions instead. Thus, Stalin tended to rule particularly through the police, but also through the other state bureaucracies. Chinese politics after 1966, when Mao turned on the party, was marked by the rise of the state bureaucracies, most dramatically the army and the police. The increasing influence of these other institutions, however, presents a danger to totalitarian rule. The party, while "conservative" in comparison with the leader, is radical in comparison with other institutions (except, possibly, the police). If the leader sufficiently weakens the party, he may find himself the captive of the more conservative bureaucracies, able at best to manoeuvre among them. This did not happen to Stalin, perhaps because of that dictator's more than usual ruthlessness; but something of the kind does seem to have happened to Mussolini, and also, to a more limited extent, to Mao. One reason the Soviet Union has not ceased completely to be totalitarian is that while the various dictators have tried, with diminishing success, to weaken the party, the party has remained the vehicle of succession to the dictatorship. At the same time, in the Soviet Union we seem to see the workings of some law of diminishing impressiveness of dictators, and as the party apparatus continues to limit the freedom of action of the leader the system will grow less and less totalitarian (which does not automatically mean more and more liberal).

Totalitarianism would seem, then, to involve an unstable coincidence

[9] Schapiro, *Totalitarianism*, p. 70.

[10] *Cf.*, Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (Yale University Press, 1968), p. 28.

[11] For a similar analysis from a rather different point of view, see Franz Schurmann, *The Logic of World Power: An Inquiry into the Origins, Currents, and Contradictions of World Politics* (New York, 1974), pp. 20–23, 28–39, 46–48.

[12] Robert C. Tucker, "Toward a Comparative Politics of Movement Regimes," *American Political Science Review*, 55, 2 (June, 1961), pp. 281–289; Leonard Schapiro and John Wilson Lewis, "The Roles of the Monolithic Party Under the Totalitarian Leader," in *Party Leadership and Revolutionary Power in China*, edited by John W. Lewis (Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 114–145.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of personal leadership and party rule. The totalitarian mode of thought is incoherent, and totalitarian politics is unstable. There is thus the possibility that totalitarian politics may degenerate into something else; or, the contradictions in totalitarianism may be in fact partly "dialectical" ones, the source of the dynamism observers claim to find in totalitarian movements. Given the incoherence of totalitarian thought, we should expect that totalitarian politics will fluctuate in intensity, being sometimes harsh, sometimes mild.

Below I identify what I take to be departures from totalitarianism in China since the death of Mao. It may be that I am too impressed by ephemera, that I am taking a snapshot of a pendulum and presenting it as a picture of the future. I believe, however, that there are at least grounds for arguing that the changes since September, 1976, add up to structural ones. In the Cultural Revolution Mao smashed the most nearly totalitarian institution, the party, to the (unintended) advantage of more conservative institutions. These were able to develop their functions in the 1970s, with Mao never really dominating the Chinese system as Stalin did the Russian. In the Chairman's last years the Chinese political structure came to resemble a conglomerate oligarchy of institutional interests manipulating the symbol of Mao and competing for his favour. The presence of Mao's inner court, the Gang of Four, persons with a strong vested interest in totalitarianism (another antinomy there), gave the structure of conflict a dualistic nature which is probably much weaker now. When Mao died the central pivot was gone, and only the interests remained. The rapid purge of the Gang of Four (itself a residue of what had once been a much larger gang) eliminated that faction furthest from institutional power, and therefore with the greatest interest in the perpetuation of totalitarian politics. The party as an institutional entity seems to play very little role in the subsequent oligarchy, except on the local level, where the party is the governing institution pure and simple. In communist systems succession to supreme leadership has typically gone to the politician able to gain control of the party machinery.[13] Hua Kuo-feng, however, rose through the state, as well as through a timely betrayal of the Gang of Four.[14]

THE official tone in China since the death of Mao is not new. Many observers have had a sense of *déjà vu*: the whole thing smacks of the 1950s. As long ago as 1956 Liu Shao-ch'i announced: "The storm of revolution has passed," [15] seemingly signalling the deradicalization

[13] Myron Rush, *How Communist States Change Their Rulers* (Cornell University Press, 1974), p. 285.

[14] Teng Hsiao-p'ing, who used to be general secretary of the party, may turn out to be the real successor to the old dictator. Hua, at least, more and more appears to be a transitional figure. But while Teng has historical connections with the party organization, he does not owe his current prominence directly to these.

[15] *Chung-kuo Kung-ch'an-tang ti-pa-ts'u Ch'uan-kuo Tai-piao Ta-hui* (Peking, 1956), p. 57.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the Chinese revolution. The revolution was soon re-radicalized, however, and it was not until 1977 that Hua Kuo-feng could echo Liu: "The first Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has been victoriously concluded." [16]

Hua's statement, of course, did not represent a complete deradicalization. Hua himself did quite well during the last Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and he promises that Cultural Revolutions will continue to come until the advent of communism. More typical of the post-Gang period is the comment of the tired old party hack Liao Ch'eng-chih, who attacks the criminally anti-Marxist counter-revolutionary attitude of "Lin Piao and the 'Gang of Four,'" who objected to the granting of special privileges to Overseas Chinese capitalists: "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has already been victoriously concluded." [17] Full stop. And none of that *first* nonsense.

The deradicalization of the 1950s did not take. The current deradicalization might, as bureaucrats such as Liao Ch'eng-chih no longer have to cope with the presence of a totalitarian leader such as Mao. This also means that there is no one like Mao who can serve as a rallying point for those discontented with particular bureaucracies, or with bureaucracy in general, the prime target of Chinese radicalism since 1949. The bureaucrats, of course, have an interest in doing their best to prevent the emergence of anyone like Mao.

During Mao's lifetime some Chinese politicians (most prominently Teng Hsiao-p'ing) would occasionally denounce the "cult of the individual" and praise collective leadership. During the period of Hua Kuo-feng's ascendency, however, there were no principled attacks on one-man rule, probably because Hua was attempting to base what prestige he had on the (to the outside observer, transparently mendacious) claim that he was Mao's chosen successor. This would make it impolitic for Hua to denounce either Mao or the cult of the individual; and as long as Hua retained primacy it was impolitic for anyone else to do so either. The mild aspersions against one-man rule coming out of the third plenary session of the 11th Central Committee, held in early winter 1978, indicate that Hua's actual power no longer accords with his formal status—if it ever really did.

Formally, therefore, the cult of Mao continues, although it has been considerably diluted.[18] And about a year after Mao's death the regime

[16] Hua Kuo-feng, "Political Report to the Eleventh Congress of the Communist Party of China," *Jen-min Jih-pao* (*People's Daily: P.D.*), August 23, 1977.

[17] Liao Ch'eng-chih, "Criticizing the Reactionary Nonsense of the 'Gang of Four' on the Question of So-Called 'Overseas Relations,'" *Kuang-ming Jih-pao* (*K.M.*), January 4, 1978.

[18] Thus, since the Cultural Revolution, newspapers used to feature on the upper right-hand corner a quote from Mao. During 1977, however, the daily text would frequently come from the sayings of Hua Kuo-feng. By 1978 Teng Hsiao-p'ing was sometimes supplying the text; and some days there would be no message at all. All programmes of Mao's which remain in favour have, since January, 1977, been credited not only to Mao but also to "beloved and respected Premier Chou En-lai." There has been a tendency to stress the roles of other late grand old men in the party as

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

began to drop delicate but explicit hints that Mao was not as infallible as once might have been thought, that he had perhaps been slightly overrated in his time. The old soldier and science administrator Nieh Jung-chen published a long essay urging people to seek truth from facts: "Firmly oppose the taking of phrases from Marxism-Leninism, the Thought of Mao Tse-tung, and treating them as dogmas apart from time, place, and circumstance."[19] A few days later a *People's Daily* editorial made the same point more bluntly: the Gang "chose random words from the works of Chairman Mao and distorted them according to their hearts' desire." We must oppose the "mechanical application of Chairman Mao's works apart from the concrete time, place, and circumstance"[20]—leaving out Nieh's softening implication that Marxism-Leninism could also be used out of context.

The downgrading of Mao need not mean a turning away from the leadership principle: it may be that the dead are being disparaged to the advantage of the living. There was, until late 1978, a rather artificial little cult of Hua Kuo-feng, whose leadership was almost always called "heroic and glorious," *ying-ming*. There would seem to have been little substance, however, either to the cult or to Hua himself. During his first year in power he had to share the spotlight with the old soldier Yeh Chieh-ying, whose position was more prominent than that of any of Mao's seconds-in-command. Where Mao would walk in lonely splendour, Hua always had old Yeh tagging along. Yeh's prominence perhaps represented not personal power but, rather, the increased institutional power of the army. The army (that is, as far as we can tell, virtually all of its factions and segments) supported Hua's moves against the Gang (one might even speculate that certain soldiers forced his moves against the Gang), but did not give immediate whole-hearted support to Hua. Soon after the purge the army paper, *Liberation Army Daily*, published three editorials on Hua's leadership. At the time of the purge Hua had, in effect, promoted himself to party chairman, and the press almost immediately began to speak of "Chairman Hua." The headlines of the first two army editorials, however, speak only of plain old "Comrade Hua Kuo-feng." The text of these editorials sometimes gives him his title, but he does not become a headlined chairman until the third. This should probably be construed to mean that as far as the army is concerned Hua is welcome to be first among equals, but he might also remember that he is still just one of the comrades. Rather suggestively, the first of

well: Chu Te, Tung Pi-wu, Ch'en I. Hua Kuo-feng, in addition to these, also from time to time paid tribute to a more sinister genro, K'ang Sheng, who was under wall poster attack by the spring of 1979.

[19] Nieh Jung-chen, "Restore and Develop the Party's Excellent Work Style," *P.D.*, September 5, 1977.

[20] *P.D.*, September 10, 1977. The same day, the anniversary of Mao's death, the *P.D.* published a grotesque colour photograph of Mao's mummy in its crystal coffin: a beached whale, a mackerel on a slab. This comment may be tasteless: the point is the tastelessness of the display itself. The normal reaction to this picture would be: that old man is *dead*, about the deadest thing anyone would care to see.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

these editorials reminds the readers that the "leader of a proletarian party is not self-appointed." [21]

In early 1978 the *Liberation Army Daily* published a set of witty articles attacking various "factions" claimed to have survived the fall of the Gang: the "wind," "slippery," and "quake" factions: persons who trim their sails to the political wind, who disclaim responsibility for past misdeeds, and who joined in causing the political earthquake when the Gang was running wild.[22] It is unlikely the soldiers are describing three separate groups: any of the terms could apply to many high ranking officials still in power—any of the terms could apply to Hua Kuo-feng. This kind of direct, blatant political initiative by the army is, I think, unprecedented since the Cultural Revolution, and indicates the weakness of personal rule at the present time.

The rehabilitation of Teng Hsiao-p'ing (almost certainly with the support of part of the army) is itself persuasive evidence of the limited nature of Hua's power. Hua rose at Teng's expense, and the two men are probably not the best of friends. The campaign to "criticize Teng" continued for more than two months after the purge of the Gang. Unofficial reports quote Hua as saying as late as the end of December 1976, that while Teng and the Gang hated each other, the nature of their crimes was the same.[23] The formal decision to rehabilitate Teng came in March 1977, supposedly after Teng had admitted to having committed a few errors,[24] although nothing was heard about any errors after Teng's public rehabilitation in July 1977 and, in fact, quite blatantly the reverse by autumn 1978. Hua's position as premier was formalized in April, 1976, in the wake of mass demonstrations protesting against the second purge of Teng Hsiao-p'ing. In November 1978, this one-time "counter-revolutionary incident" was officially pronounced to be a patriotic outpouring. If China does produce a supreme leader enjoying a status similar to Mao's, it does at the moment appear that it will be Hua Kuo-feng.

Teng Hsiao-p'ing, while by the spring of 1979 clearly the most powerful man in China politically, does not seem a likely candidate for supreme leadership either, even disregarding his great age. A person making a political come-back is not initially in an intrinsically strong position—as the ease with which Teng was purged the second time demonstrates. By now Teng surely must have developed some power base of his own, but it remains an open question just how dependent he might be upon the good-will of those who found it expedient to

[21] For the texts of these editorials, see *P.D.*, October 31, November 9, November 23, 1976.

[22] For the texts, see *P.D.*, January 6, January 10, January 15, 1978.

[23] *Chung-yang Jih-pao* (Taipei), February 26, 1977. For a partial transcript of an improbable conversation between Hua and Teng which is supposedly circulating clandestinely among students in Peking, see *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 20, 1978.

[24] *P.D.*, July 23, 1977; *Ch'i-shih Nien-tai*, 91 (August, 1977). pp. 2–4.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bring him back. Teng, according to persistent rumour, owes his rehabilitation to the support of what might be called the "Canton Gang," a powerful cabal based in South China headed by the soldier Hsu Shih-yu and the party bureaucrat Wei Kuo-ch'ing, both of them Politburo members. There would seem to be some concern about this gang in the regime's hierarchy. In 1977 Hsu Hsiang-ch'ien, an old soldier and a friend of Yeh Chien-ying's who replaced Yeh as defence minister in 1978, published a strongly worded warning against military usurpation of party functions and authority. We must "prevent individual ambitionists and plotters from using their authority to set up autocratic dictatorships." Because of Lin Piao and the Gang, Hsiang-ch'ien says, military discipline is in a shambles.[25] Hsu Shih-yu would seem to be the most likely target for such talk. If Teng owes his rehabilitation to the Canton Gang and if he tries to repay his debt, he will make enemies. If he abandons the Canton Gang, does he have anywhere else to turn? And as long as something like the Canton Gang continues to exist, neither Teng nor anyone else can enjoy undisputed supremacy.

The absence of a truly supreme leader should allow the bureaucracies and regional cliques relatively free play; and this, in turn, should lead to a modification of the totalitarian system. I shall argue that China is unlikely to evolve into a liberal system; but increased scope for bureaucratic interests at least constitutes a liberalization. This is seen most clearly in literary policy, a field where the Gang used to play unhindered. The slogan about a hundred flowers blooming is again being used with something approaching its original meaning. We do not want poisonous weeds, "but ordinary questions of world view are not the same as political questions. Even less should we confound questions of right and wrong in science and art with political questions." [26] The Gang—the Maoists—had denounced the entire literary policy of the regime prior to 1966, when they took over that policy themselves. By 1978 the new rulers had gone to the other extreme: no doubt there had been a few mistakes, but "the general direction, from beginning to end, has been revolutionary." [27] The Chinese people now have access again to the classic works of world and Chinese literature. The liberalism of the pre-1966 period, however, had hardly been of Jeffersonian proportions, and it remains to be seen whether the current loosening will encourage any great creative outpouring.

It is not clear precisely whose bureaucratic interest is served by this loosening in the literary field. It certainly serves to improve the climate of educated public opinion. In the past, periods of relative liberalism in literature have coincided with periods of relatively lenient treatment of intellectuals in general, and these periods have coincided with

[25] Hsu Hsing-ch'ien, "Always Uphold the Principle that the Party Commands the Gun," *P.D.*, September 19, 1977.
[26] *P.D.*, October 28, 1977.
[27] *P.D.*, January 11, 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

periods of moderate or bureaucratic dominance in the system. The bureaucracies depend upon trained manpower, and the political superiors of the experts have an incentive to indulge them. Decent treatment of the technocrats seems to spill over into literary policy. The Maoists used to distrust experts on the grounds that experts could become too bound up with their own work, ignoring its political import. From the no law and no heaven point of view technique is embarrassing in that it does not readily yield to political dictation. It is limited by physical possibility, a limit the Maoists were not always disposed to accept.[28] The bureaucracies, with their more restricted view of things, have fewer problems in accepting as their goals simply the wealth and power of the state and are restoring to technical intellectuals the precarious privilege they once enjoyed.[29] The one area where under current policy a hundred flowers are really likely to bloom is physical science, a big change from the time of the Gang when science meant, on the one hand, the dissemination of elementary techniques of immediate practical utility and on the other hand, the exegesis of Engels' speculations on the philosophy of science.[30]

The new policy toward intellectuals is motivated by a concern for the economic development of China, the implementation of the "four modernizations." The Gang's approach to economics is now described as "institutionalized lies." Their stress on "politics takes command," upon what their western apologists were once pleased to call moral incentives, is now denounced as exploitation and as a deliberate attempt to discredit the party.[31] The current rulers are returning openly to policies which the Gang used to denounce as the "capitalist road." Enterprises are being warned they had better show a profit.[32] On the farm the general principle is that compensation should vary according to work, rather than political attitude, and in no case should there be more pay for less work.[33]

These latter policies are not really a "return" to the capitalist road; they are in fact the policies which have been generally followed since the collapse of the Great Leap Forward in late 1960. But when Mao was alive or when the Gang of Four held sway—however one may wish to express this—the policies imposed themselves by economic neces-

[28] This attitude is not necessarily totally irrational, although in practice it usually was. The Maoists argued that by refusing to give "superstitious reverence" to the authority of experts they would encourage the pushing back of the boundaries of what is held to be the physically possible. The only trouble with this argument is that in more cases than not the facts were otherwise.

[29] Li Hung-lin, "The Historical Destiny of Brain Work," *K.M.*, August 9, 1977.

[30] Charles P. Ridley, *China's Scientific Policies: Implications for Internatoinal Cooperation* (*Washington*, 1976). *K.M.*, January 18, 1978 defends the theory of relativity from what it holds to be the Gang's stupid attacks on it.

[31] Nieh, "The Party's Excellent Work Style." Nieh is a bit more blunt than the summary of his position given above implies: "The 'Gang of Four' are a bunch of rotten eggs who piss and crap on the heads of the masses. . . ."

[32] *P.D.*, August 27, 1977.

[33] *P.D.*, December 18, 1977. Peasants, however, have apparently not benefited as much from the new policies as have workers.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sity, but could not be legitimized. Anyone who argued too strongly for such policies was vulnerable to being called a counter-revolutionary or a bourgeois element or some such thing. The 1975 state constitution guaranteed peasants and workers certain economic rights to material compensation and peasants were allowed to keep small private plots. Within a few weeks these guarantees were attacked by the Gang of Four as "bourgeois rights" (*tzu-ch'an-chieh-chi fa-ch-üan*), practices which are perhaps necessary in the current stage of development but which are doomed to extinction and which, until they are extinguished, form the social basis for the rise of new privileged class. These bourgeois rights must be restricted as much as possible, and in no case should they be expanded.[34] The contradictory directives coming from the elite, together with the possibility of arbitrary action implicit in the position of the Gang, did not encourage an atmosphere conducive to stable economic growth.

The Gang opposed material incentives and the like because they lead to economic inequality and give the beneficiaries of the inequality an interest in preserving the *status quo*. The "bourgeois rights" to material incentives provide a social base for a new ruling class—technocrats and economic administrators, one assumes, although the Gang claimed to be afraid of peasants as well—and this will bring the revolution to an end. The new rulers are not bothered by this. They think that inequality, "distribution according to labour," is a fine spur to activism.[35]

Perhaps most significantly, the attitude toward bourgeois rights themselves has changed. The term is a translation of Marx's *bürgerliche Recht*. The literal English translation of *fa-ch'üan*, however, is "*legal* rights." (Chinese, like English, but unlike German, Russian, or French, makes the distinction in this context.) Thus, the attack on bourgeois rights served also as an attack on the rule of law and as a justification of the Gang's notion that the class enemy was so active that he could only be handled by dictatorship. Now, however, it is pointed out that *Recht* has no necessary connotation of law (in terms of a formal legal system), and Marx's term is rendered instead as *tzu-ch'an-chieh-chi ch'üan-li*—bourgeois rights in the sense of powers or privileges.[36] The consequence is to trivialize the attack on rights to a mere attack on special privileges and to remove the automatic connection between the notion of the bourgeoisie and that of a well-developed legal system. The regime is now in a position, if it so chooses, to resume the work of drafting formal legal codes, a project abandoned under radical pressure since 1957. In this connection it is perhaps signi-

[34] Yao Wen-yan, "On the Social Base of the Lin Piao Anti Clique," *P.D.*, March 1, 1975; Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, "On Full-Scale Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie," *P.D.*, April 1, 1975.

[35] Li Hung-lin, "Is Distribution According to Labour a Socialist or a Capitalist Principle?" *P.D.*, September 27, 1977.

[36] Wang Ch'e, "Fake Left, True Right," *P.D.*, December 12, 1977.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ficant that for the first time since perhaps the onset of the Cultural Revolution the regime is paying some attention to the court system, condemning the Gang's use of extra-legal institutions such as the urban militia instead of the courts. The courts, however, are still held to be "tools of proletarian dictatorship." [37]

Liberalization of literature, the encouragement of science and learning, common sense in economics, a concern for the material well-being of the population, the rule of law: the Chinese counter-revolution may sound too good to be true. Put this way, it is: this is only one aspect of recent events. There is also the relentless hounding of the "Gang system," and in 1977 the frequent resort to public executions. On another plane, the new order encourages inequality—at least more than Mao and the Gang did—along with such not self-evidently humane practices as Stakhanovism and Taylorism. The goal of the new regime, again, is not liberalization in itself, but the wealth and power of the state and the well-being of the bureaucratic structures which benefit from this wealth and power. Liberalization, however, is a partial means to this end. The assault on existing reality has been called off.

THE turning away from a totalitarianism has not been unambiguous, at least until autumn 1978. It is easy for the *People's Daily* to say: "Those comrades who still have fear in their hearts, who stare to the east and west, to the north and south, who hesitate and procrastinate—those comrades no longer have the slightest pretext or reason to waver." [38] It is perhaps less easy to persuade the comrades that this is in fact true. The appeal of the wind faction, one suspects, remains as strong as ever.

The deradicalization of the Chinese revolution was accompanied by a massive and apparently quite drastic purge.[39] By the latter part of 1977 the purge had moved beyond the Gang proper and their immediate associates and was directed against a "Gang system" whose roots penetrated deep into society: a "counter-revolutionary stew-pot" of "renegades, spies, class aliens, new bourgeois elements, local villains, gangsters, hoods, vandals, corrupt elements, shameless literateurs, self-prostituting so-called old cadres, political opportunists of all shapes and sizes." [40]

Repression, then, has not ended; but not all repression is totalitarian. Much of the purge seems to consist of the revenge of the old cadres—

[37] *P.D.*, December 4, 1977. See also Yeh Chien-ying's report on the new constitution, *P.D.*, March 8, 1978.

[38] *P.D.*, November 19, 1977. Such fears lingered even into 1979. *P.D.*, January 26, 1979.

[39] One source which is said to come from dissidents on the mainland claims that several hundred thousand people have been killed since the purge of the Gang. *Chung-yang Jih-pao*, May 17, 1978. But this has not been confirmed.

[40] Yu Ch'ing, "Thoroughly Smash the Gang System of the 'Gang of Four'," *P.D.*, August 6, 1977.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that is, the victims of the Cultural Revolution, not the "self-prostituting" old cadres who had allied themselves with the Gang—and to the extent that this is so the violence should serve to consolidate the counter-revolution. If China in fact abandons totalitarianism, however, this white terror should end once the old cadres feel they are even and those whose interests are damaged by the new order are sufficiently cowed. The language used against the Gang system, however, resembles that used by the Gang to justify its own dictatorship and permanent terror, and there is certainly no institutional check on the perpetuation of random terror in China.

Such random terror is functional for a totalitarian dictatorship: permanent revolution requires permanent enemies for the revolution to overthrow, and if these do not exist they must be invented. A counter-revolutionary or post-revolutionary dictatorship has no such need. The problem in China is that within the winning coalition there were those who would seem to have an objective interest in the perpetuation of the revolution. Radicalism in China since 1949 has been an anti-bureaucratic tendency, but the radicals have had to make use of bureaucracy and some bureaucracies have profited from the victories of the radicals. The army, for example, rode to power on the backs of the radicals in the Cultural Revolution. Here the association was "dialectical": the army has been a generally conservative force, and the army later helped to destroy the radicals. The relations between the Gang and some other bureaucracies, however, were perhaps more straightforward. Thus, the Cultural Revolution saw the growth of influence of the police system as well as of the army, and the police may have a direct interest in the perpetuation of the radical line: there are a limited number of places at the top, and one can justify giving some of these to policemen most easily if it is held that society is full of enemies in need of suppression. The influence of the police system, then, creates a vested interest in totalitarianism. The Poltiburo elected in 1977 included Hua Kuo-feng, Wang Tung-hsing,[41] Chi Teng-k'uei, Wu Te, Ni Chih-fu, and Keng Piao: all persons seemingly affiliated with the police or espionage systems, and all apparently former allies of the Gang of Four. These persons, however, while not formally purged, were clearly out of favour by early 1979.

A "two-line" type argument of the Cultural Revolution form in fact continued, although in a very muted way, during the period of Hua Kuo-feng's dominance. The third plenum of the 11th Central Committee, which met from December 12 to December 22 1978, seems to mark at least the short-term decisive defeat of the Hua Kuo-feng style radicals and the political eclipse (but not a total eclipse) of the police types listed above. The plenum was held in an atmosphere of popular demonstrations mobilized by Teng Hsiao-p'ing's allies—the

[41] In autumn 1977 Wang, perhaps the most sinister of the top leaders, seemed to be trying to develop *his* own cult, basing it on an affirmation of the heritage of Mao. See *P.D.*, September 8, 1977.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

use of Maoist methods to dismantle Maoism. The plenum could not have been a particularly pleasant meeting for Hua Kuo-feng. The day before the meeting closed the *People's Daily* endorsed the popular demonstrations, noting that everything Teng had done in 1975 was entirely correct and in accord with the wishes of Mao (a lie) and the masses (rather more than a half-truth); this is why the masses have such trust in Teng and the other old cadres.[42] The plenum itself sets out a programme for the moderate line: the country now has peace and stability, and peace and stability are needed if the four modernizations are to be successful. To carry out the four modernizations we need to pay attention to objective economic laws, something we tended to neglect in the past. Agriculture is in particularly bad shape, and we must be very wary of "egalitarianism"—i.e., too high rates of collectivization. In 1975 Mao let Teng Hsiao-p'ing take over the running of the country, and he did quite well until the Gang ruined things. The mass demonstrations of April, 1976, protesting against Teng's dismissal, were a great thing. The plenum rehabilitates certain old enemies of Mao, most surprisingly, P'eng Te-huai, the famous communist soldier who had been purged in 1959 for opposing the people's communes. As Mao teaches us, when we make mistakes we should correct them. "Comrade Mao Tse-tung" was a great leader, a great Marxist; but he had a scientific attitude towards everything, including himself: he was well aware of his many imperfections. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was primarily directed against Soviet revisionism (not, apparently, against domestic revisionism, as might previously have been thought). The Cultural Revolution had many defects, but we should not be too hasty in re-evaluating it. "Comrade Hua Kuo-feng" gave a speech at the meeting stressing collective leadership. He said there should be less glorification of specific individuals (himself, obviously, but possibly also Teng Hsiao-p'ing). We should always call each other comrade, and not use the title of the office (such as chairman). Also, no comrade should pretend to issue "directives" (*chih-shih*), something Mao did when alive, and which Hua had begun to do as well.[43] According to rumour, Hua had made a self-criticism at the work meeting preceding the plenum.

THINGS in China are in flux, as they have been since 1966. It is difficult to say where the retreat from totalitarianism, if that is in fact what is going on, will lead.[44] I have argued that the regime is liberalizing; there is at least the possibility that it will become liberal.

[42] *P.D.*, December 22, 1978.

[43] *P.D.*, December 24, 1978.

[44] Things are in such a flux that one hesitates to say anything at all. In an earlier and rather more pessimistic and conservative version of this essay I had mentioned the possibility of an alliance between the bureaucrats and Red Guards, only to pronounce unequivocally that no such alliance would come about. "China-watchers" sometimes tend to judge themselves and others by standards more appropriate to a gypsy with

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There is at least one potential structure of power whose triumph could in fact lead to a much more liberal political system in China. The Gang of Four seem to have been without much personal following by the time of their overthrow, but some of their ideas still had appeal. To say anything here is to generalize beyond the evidence, but it seems that on the whole the Cultural Revolution generation—educated youths coming to maturity during Mao's last decade—were in the process of rejecting Maoist economic policies while adhering to the Maoist political line: in effect, rejecting what was totalitarian in Maoism while adhering to what was in theory libertarian. There was in particular an affirmation of the radicals' determination to oppose the tide, to stand against power for the sake of truth. For those who lack power, antinomianism—no law and no heaven—has liberal implications. An alliance between the Teng Hsiao-p'ing bureaucrats and the former Red Guards would provide a context for an incremental growth in liberty under conditions of social order and material improvement.

By the winter of 1978–79 such an alliance had formed. The Third Plenum was accompanied by a lively mass movement encouraged, to be sure, by those who were winning the power struggle, but perhaps not completely under the control of the winners. Free speech and the right to dissent against rulers were endorsed by the *People's Daily* in January 1979. Some comrades, the paper said, are complaining about the re-evaluation of the 1976 riots. They are afraid that to encourage people to speak their minds will lead to chaos. "These comrades do not understand what democratic centralism really is. They think democracy means that I give you democracy and let you speak out—but only as long as what you say does not go beyond the limits of what I like to hear." This is wrong. "Only if the masses can express all sorts of opinions can the leadership implement correct centralism." Obviously not all opinions will be correct. Some will be distorted and biased. "This is unavoidable, and also nothing to be afraid of. The sky won't fall if we let people speak out." [45]

The paper does admit, however, that a minority of persons are acting in bad faith; and free speech remains something that "we let" people do. By the spring of 1979 there were doubts about how enduring this alliance would be. As the anniversary of the 1976 riots approached their rehabilitation became more and more of an embarrassment to the rulers; and the anniversary itself was celebrated in part by the arrest of some of the leading dissidents on charges of counter-revolution. Democracy apparently continued to mean that one could speak freely as long as one said what the rulers wanted to hear.

The problem is that once power was consolidated the bureaucrats would have little reason for continuing the alliance; and they probably

a gold-capped tooth. Scholarship should not pretend to prophecy but, rather, to contingent prediction: if such and such happens then something else might follow. But there is no way of saying whether the conditions of the major premise will hold.

[45] *P.D.*, January 3, 1979.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

retain their instinctive dislike for lack of discipline of any kind. In addition, the ideological foundations for this alliance have vanished with the discrediting of the more general Maoist ideology.

The ideological foundation for this potential alliance is also gone. There is no longer any open recognition of the normal presence of conflicting tendencies within the party. Radical Maoism was based on the notion that continuous social change would always produce new sources of conflict. There could be opposition to the ruling groups within the party (in practice, to those in command of the various bureaucratic structures) because the party could generate "new bourgeois elements." The new line is that the new bourgeois elements are people like Wang Hung-wen who take it upon themselves to oppose the party.[46]

The abandonment of the Maoist view of conflict does not mean the end of the conflict. The new order will be bureaucratic, but the bureaucracies will have interests which conflict. While the possibility of a liberalization as extensive as that in Hungary in 1956 or Czechoslovakia in 1968 remains—a liberalization the Russians this time would be unable to suppress—the most probable development, or the one which requires the least use of the imagination to project, is the formation of a conservative oligarchy: not conservative in a principled sense, but in its dedication to the preservation of its own power and privilege. The oligarchs will conspire and intrigue against each other, but will try to avoid grand social mobilization on the scale of the Cultural Revolution, and may also try to avoid sudden large-scale purges, for fear of losing control of things and risking unpredictable changes in the structure of power. The move away from totalitarianism will permit the voicing of some opposition, but the bureaucratic structure of power will prevent too many concessions to it. China may become a repressive *Rechtstaat*, mildly more liberal than the Soviet Union, say, but not quite as liberal as Taiwan.

An evolution of this nature would be typical of communist regimes.[47] Terror and revolutionary totalitarianism soon pass on, partly because they become non-functional but also (if this is not merely another way of saying the same thing) because, having served their purpose, they are no longer needed. During the Cultural Revolution some westerners liked to make this sort of argument:

> Seen in its best light, Mao's case is based upon the belief that the concentration of authority tends to perpetuate itself, that centralization tends to be coercive and evil, and that the best hope for the development of a just society rests on the persuasion of men by rational argument and in their participation in public affairs.[48]

[46] *K.M.*, February 15, 1978.

[47] Alexander Dallin and George Breslauer, *Political Terror in Communist Systems* (Stanford University Press, 1970), pp. 83, 102, 123, 144.

[48] Michel Oksenberg, in *China in Crisis*, Vol. I, Ho Ping-ti and Tang Tsou, eds. (University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 419.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This sounded tinny even at the time, and at this distance I doubt whether many will be inclined to confuse Mao with Voltaire. " Rational argument and participation in public affairs," after all, is perhaps a mild way of saying palace intrigue, mob violence, and police terror. Such statements fail to show an awareness that totalitarianism is even more " coercive and evil " than bureaucratism. But they also show the opposition between totalitarianism and bureaucratism, and the truth complementary to the truth they miss, namely that bureaucratism is not *much* better than totalitarianism.

Revolutionary totalitarianism is hostile to bureaucracy; and what has in the past been identified simply as totalitarianism is perhaps more accurately revolutionary totalitarianism. The concept itself, however, carries no necessary connotation of revolution, and there may be a form of totalitarianism—the near-total concentration of political power and its use without reference to law or heaven—which is quite consistent with bureaucracy. This form of totalitarianism will be more rational, less violent and coercive, less incoherent—and, therefore, more stable—than the earlier attempts. In fact, the experience of China and other communist countries leads to the melancholy reflection that revolutionary totalitarianism is merely the means of reaching a new, non-revolutionary, bureaucratized totalitarianism.[49] Revolutionary totalitarianism may be the means by which the late-industrializing states reach the condition to which the earlier industrialized, former liberal states move by evolution, a condition of bureaucratic domination, centralized direction, and moral hollowness.[50]

[49] Thus, Talcott Parsons, in his foreword to C. K. Yang's *The Chinese Family in the Communist Revolution* (MIT Press, 1959) argues that the totalitarian control claimed over family life by the communists in China is merely to promote the kinds of things all of us good liberals believe in. This is true enough. In China the authority of the family is destroyed as a deliberate political ploy, while in the west it was destroyed as part of a more or less spontaneous social evolution. The end, in each case, is liberation: the person is freed from the authority of the primary group, from the authority of others who presumably love him, and is exposed naked to the impersonal power of the state.

[50] *Cf.*, Daniel Bell, " The Post-Industrial Society: The Evolution of an Idea," *Survey* No. 78 (Spring 1971) pp. 102–168.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Solzhenitsyn at Harvard *

Alain Besançon

THE speech given by Solzhenitsyn on Commencement Day, 8 June 1978, at Harvard University can be interpreted in at least two ways: the first is clear and straightforward, the second is more audacious and hypothetical, but could well be the more interesting and accurate. I should like to present both these interpretations in turn.

There can be few men, and certainly no Russians, born since 1917, more admirable than Alexander Solzhenitsyn. He was nearly destroyed both physically and morally—along with 50 million others—by a basic evil, and has come through, wounded but triumphant. He recognized that the power of the Soviet regime lay in the jealously guarded secrecy surrounding its nature and its methods. It was he who fathomed this secrecy and made it public. He brought within range of our emotions the suffering imposed by this regime, the specific nature of which was unknown in man's previous experience. It was through him that the West was able to imagine the unimaginable. I could go on for a long time, but I would not exhaust the list of his great deeds. As the situation which gave rise to him is without precedent in history, it is difficult to know whom to compare him with. In some respects he is a *libertador* like Bolivar or O'Connell. But as yet he has not liberated his country. He represents a higher cause than political liberty, as what was at stake was not simply oppression but a more fundamental perversion, involving the moral order, outside which humanity worthy of the name could no longer exist. It is therefore not improper to name him among the Prophets and Confessors—Elijah, Athanasius, Maximus—an association of which Solzhenitsyn, who believes he has been blessed with exceptional gifts, is far from being unaware.

To change to a different tone. The responsibilities Solzhenitsyn has assumed are commensurate with his person. Single-handed, he can set his country on a right or wrong course. So much was clear from his first book, which was a political event. It was also, like those which followed, a political manoeuvre, a well thought out move, skilfully played, in a hand which was nevertheless beaten. This we learned in *The Calf Butted the Oak*. He immediately altered his approach, but he did not relinquish his political purpose. He never loses sight of this, whatever the circumstances, and it is this that gives him a superficial resemblance to Lenin. Like Lenin, he is ascetic and solitary, allowing for little spontaneity except in personal friend-

* This article first appeared in *Commentaire* No. 4, Winter 1978–79. The translation is published here with the kind permission of the editor and the author.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ships. Like Lenin, he is obsessed with the passing of time, with the good use of time. It would be wrong to see this similarity as a personality trait; it is determined by the objective situation. Solzhenitsyn sees in Lenin the germinal cell of communism. He would like to see himself as the counterbalance to Lenin, as his antitype. It is, therefore, understandable that he arms himself with the same weapons, uses similar techniques and adopts a comparable manner. This is a general rule. When you have been close enough to communism to understand it and to evaluate the impotence of those who, without understanding it are nevertheless hostile, it is all too easy for them to see you as an "inverted communist." Solzhenitsyn wishes to be an inverted Lenin, a Lenin on the side of good.

But if we bear in mind that the essence of Leninism is the illusion of complete, perfect, infallible knowledge then anti-Lenin must be very careful about what he thinks and says. The effectiveness of a dissident is determined absolutely by the quality of his contact with reality. Only sound thinking in constant touch with reality can form a counterbalance to thought devoid of all reality. Nadezhda Mandelshtam has none of the power, the dynamism, the genius if you like, of Solzhenitsyn. But with her we feel safe. This woman, whose suffering, love, humility and faith have distanced her from all illusion, all false enthusiasm, hits infallibly home. The reader feels it immediately—she has *understood* once and for all. She has raised the feminine virtue of common sense to its heights. With Solzhenitsyn things have always been different. With each publication, with each speech, we had the impression of being present at an amazing obstacle race. Each time there was fear and trepidation, each time he pulled it off. Then came the speech at Harvard. Was this not a misjudgment? A blunder? Here we have to be extremely careful. This speech can be evaluated for what he says and for what he means. In what he says, his weaknesses and his blind spots are all too apparent. In what he means, he reveals our own weakness and blindness. This is why the second interpretation is harder for us than the first.

THE first interpretation holds no problems. It is a question of reading this speech against the background of Russian history, and linking this with the intellectual experiences of the author.

Solzhenitsyn does not belong to the intelligentsia either by family or tradition. As a provincial, a southerner, he received what education was available far from Moscow in the period of the five-year plans: a bit of engineering, a few classics, chosen and filtered according to Soviet usage, some *diamat*. This was the intellectual equipment of the young, successful, artillery captain when, suddenly, without his ever dreaming of such a possibility, the authorities laid hands on him.

Anna Akhmatova (as one of her friends told me), when asked one day about Solzhenitsyn, uttered the words *sovetskii chelovek*, a Soviet

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

man. It is easy to imagine how this *grande dame*, aware of being the inheritor of all the most civilized aspects of Russian culture, reacted to all that was heavy, crude, plebeian in this Gulag survivor, when he concerned himself with art. His greatness, however, lies elsewhere. It lies in having proved, in his own person, the survival and victory of *conscience*, in a primary and universal sense. In a world dominated not only by murder but by the right to murder, not only by iniquity but by the duty to be iniquitous, not only by lies but by the obligation to lie, he re-established a common morality. Joseph de Maistre made a distinction between the barbarian, who was potentially receptive to the seeds of civilization, and the savage, who had undergone a final fall from grace and in whom original sin was somehow redoubled beyond all possibility of redemption. The question has to be asked, whether the Soviet regime—by removing the touchstones of good and evil, of true and false—has not caused the Russian people to fall from barbarity to savagery. This is more or less the conclusion of Zinoviev, who sees in Soviet man a mutation to a lower sphere in the scale of human beings, a final fall with no hope of return. Not true! Solzhenitsyn is living proof to the contrary.

Camp was, therefore, the school where his lack of culture became culture, if by culture we mean the faculty of correct discernment. It was here that he acquired a sense of reality and the ability to demolish the vast sham with a single word. The Russian intelligentsia had dreamed of the Russian people for over a century, but was never able to reach them. Here, finally, was a writer of the people, with their joviality, insolence and enormous physical strength, and a sure instinct for spotting swindlers and tricksters. Yes, indeed, a Soviet man: this is his strongest point.

But Solzhenitsyn could not leave it at this. He applied himself to acquiring culture with all his native energy. He turned to classic Russian culture—but which one?

One tradition seems to have held little attraction for him—that which runs, say, from Pushkin to Mandelshtam and Akhmatova. This tradition is characterized by an aesthetic concern with form, by political liberalism, religious moderation, a keen appreciation of a decent, happy life, and by a concern for the individual human being rather than the collective destiny of the nation. This is not Solzhenitsyn's line. It is a poetic tradition and he is no poet. He learned the novelist's craft from Tolstoy and from those who have a similar approach to narrative. *Matryona's House* could take its place in *The Sportman's Sketches*, or, as regards its moral, in the educational tales of the late Tolstoy. The connections between *August 1917* and *War and Peace* are clear, perhaps too clear. Solzhenitsyn's stylistic innovations, the massive injection of camp slang, of modern trivialized speech, are of the same type as those made by the Russian Realists, who were already aware of the importance of collecting popular words and expressions

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to bear witness to the vitality of the Russian spoken word. In this the writer was showing that he was part of national life and was accomplishing a patriotic mission. Nowadays, this is more than ever essential, as the Russian language is so corroded by ideology that whenever the living language erupts through the dead, official language, this is in itself a liberation, or, from the authorities' point of view, a subversion.

In 1957, after he was released, Solzhenitsyn asked to be baptized and was received into the communion of the Russian Orthodox Church. In itself, this decision implied no specific cultural tendency. It was inevitable, however, that he turned towards the large body of Russian thought which hails from Orthodoxy. There have been two periods when these ideas were strong: the first in the nineteenth century, with the Slavophiles, Gogol, Dostoevsky, and the second in the last years of the old regime, with the "religious revival," including Symbolism. This intellectual tradition contains elements of very unequal value, but as they are all seen to be part of Christian thought, they are stamped with an overall guarantee of truth, which can be very misleading. The most deceptive is the theological reinforcement of nationalism, the fusion of the national idea with the messianic idea, the identification of Russia with Israel. Unfortunately, although God may have spoken to the Jews, he did not speak to the Russians. Where, on these desolate steppes, is there any indication of God's election? A theological argument, borrowed from German schools, provides the answer; just as a distinction must be made between the mystical, invisible Church and the visible Church on earth, so with Russia, symbol of the Church, a distinction must be made between its essence, which is holy, and the accidents of its actual historical existence. As Tyutchev wrote, you do not understand Russia, you believe in Russia. Despite the fact that its achievements are apparently superior, in its essence the West is corrupt, a "tomb," a "graveyard." The logical conclusion is: if the Russian idea, incarnation of Good, is hidden from sight and revealed only in the light of faith, the Russia we see is insignificant and can without qualms be surrendered to Evil. Thus, in the name of Christianity a nihilism was established which was more noble and more profound, and consequently more damaging than revolutionary nihilism. This current of thought had scant regard for efforts at social improvement, scorned legal formalities and national prosperity, disdained propriety, rules of conduct and material comfort. Its exponents held in high esteem a soulful idealism, an emotional mysticism, a cult of vacant profundity. They looked down on the selfish Englishman, the frivolous Frenchman, the materialist American. Thus came into being the Russian stereotypes of the prophetic poet, the self-sacrificing woman, the inscrutable philosopher. The educated public, sickened by the demented populist-Marxists, reacted favourably to these new philosophers, without being able to

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

extricate itself from the tangle of Christian tradition and theosophy, extravagance and genius. Nadezhda Mandelshtam has brilliantly illustrated the crushing responsibility of the Symbolists, who thought of themselves as prophets, but were simply revolutionaries of a different kind. They effectively disarmed the opposition. The ordinary Russian, living in the direst poverty in the name of a future reality, dared not demand any legal rights, property, values of everyday life. Had he not been taught that all this was as nought in the view of the sublime essence? The most he could claim was more compassion, more charity, some religious spirit; Doctor Zhivago's protests are limited to this.

There is nothing more attractive, more seductive than the all-enveloping Russian religious philosophy. No one in Russia who attempts to form his own view of the world can escape it. Nearly all the great writers, all the music, all the painting, all the thought of émigrés are connected with it. With the exception of the fragile, discontinuous Pushkinian thread, it *is* Russian culture. For Solzhenitsyn, therefore, to acquire culture was to enter into these categories of thought.

FINALLY, there is the West. While still in Russia, it was not easy for Solzhenitsyn to drink from this source. Newspapers and books are imported only with difficulty. To get hold of them, you have to live in Moscow, have plenty of free time, money, and access to private libraries, to *samizdat*. For ten years, Solzhenitsyn lived between Riazan and Obninsk, putting up in huts or sheds without the slightest material comfort. He nevertheless managed to have a family with three children and to write a monumental *oeuvre*. This left little time for finding out what was happening elsewhere. It is hardly surprising that he has retained the sketchy theories and Club of Rome style arguments, which were very much in fashion in the scientific circles where he found help and protection.

But was Solzhenitsyn really interested in getting to know the West? He never sought to emulate Pushkin or Mandelshtam in this. These poets set themselves the task of creating Russian harmonies for what they found in Shakespeare and in French and German writers. For Mandelshtam, Dante was alive, the wellspring of all poetry, a celestial archetype to be contemplated endlessly from the dark depths of the USSR, a model precisely because he was Italy just as Mandelshtam was Russia. But the idea of transnational cultural communion did not come naturally to the author of the *Gulag*. He is Russian and for him that suffices.

Here he was then, expelled and thrust into the West, which held far less interest for him than the destiny of his own nation. How would he react? It is worth noting that his pre-expulsion writings were completely free of those disagreeable opinions, so frequently ex-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pressed in classic Russian literature, from Fonvizin to Blok, through Dostoevsky: the unfair denigration, the incomprehension, the jealousy, the wilful ignorance, the sweeping condemnation. His sense of justice helped Solzhenitsyn to be fair in this respect.

However, when he first set foot on foreign soil, Solzhenitsyn took a decision and failed to review a certain prejudice. He decided not to learn any foreign language. It is always painful and frustrating for a writer to study another language. We also get the impression that for him, as for Sinyavsky, for Maximov, for nearly all émigrés, learning another language is a kind of betrayal of Russian and, in as much as the language has always been invested with magic power, a betrayal of Russia. It is as though their mission to preserve Russian culture and the Russian spirit means that they must lock themselves up in a language from which nobody has the power to expel them. I have known several old people who emigrated in the 20s and who after 50 years are incapable of saying "hullo" and "thank you." This loyalty may be quite touching in the first few years, but ends up being a pitiful handicap. The émigrés of the last century would have experienced the same tribulations, if they had not, as luck would have it, learned the languages of the countries where they settled, at home, before leaving. The prejudice lay in thinking that the West knows nothing and understands less about Russia. This does not alter the fact that it was the West which took the trouble to study this country, to find the right method of approach, and that Russia was responsible for creating all the fog and obfuscation, frighteningly effective even for Russians. The great falsifications of Russian history have always been created by Russians, from the Slavophiles to the *diamat* historians. And it has always been Western writers, from Schloezer and Lévêque in the eighteenth century to the European and American historians of our own generation who have made the corrections. But such is the strangeness of the history of this country, that its inhabitants believe they alone can understand it, as they alone have experienced it. Suffering, alas, does not of itself bring understanding, and many history books written in Russia become mere documentary sources in the West, with any analysis still remaining to be done. Boris Souvarine has replied pertinently to Solzhenitsyn on this point.

THIS brings us to the speech at Harvard. I have made my comments and I do not intend to analyse it. Moreover, it is impossible not to agree on the essential point: we are in a dire situation. Even if things turn out better than he fears, they nevertheless do not bode well. The great pessimists of the last century who were quite definite in their predictions of our demise—Flaubert, Baudelaire, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche—even if they were wrong (we are still here, thank goodness!), were nevertheless right in that we still read them with the same anxiety. Anyone from the West who is in the least bit thoughtful will agree with

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Solzhenitsyn on the substance of his reproaches. It is true that we lack civic courage, that our lives are diminished by competitiveness and status seeking, that we treat our freedom very frivolously and irresponsibly, that we pay dearly for the freedom of the press, that fashion obsesses us emotionally and corrupts us intellectually, that our attitude in Indochina, at Helsinki and Belgrade was senseless and shameful, that communism is gaining strength at our expense, nurtured by our weakness and our apostasy. . . .

What is unfortunate is that these accusations, true in themselves, are rooted in an overall vision which is false and misleading. Behind the observations lies a theory, a theory which provides Solzhenitsyn all too easily with an explanation for our inadequacies. This is the Slavophile theory, which once again claims to be borne out by the facts. The West is being eaten away by an internal canker, because its basis is rational—technical and legalistic—and formal. This is an old Russian theme which originated in German Romanticism, was adopted by Kireyevsky and Khomyakov and repeated from generation to generation until the present day. It gains fresh strength each time a Russian leaves his country—where a pre-modern way of life, social immobility and state despotism are combined—and arrives in the West. In Russia law does not exist—and Solzhenitsyn complains forcibly about this—but neither are there the tensions of Western society. What happens in Russia in the absence of law—of any transpersonal, stable framework for relationships—is that superior and inferior enter into an endless mutal understanding, as do the inferiors, all equal in their subservience to the whim of those in power. These relationships may not be just, but at least they are personal. One then succumbs to the temptation of confusing warmth with justice and opting for warmth rather than justice. The shadowy togetherness of a byre, mingled breath, emotional effusiveness, endless talk: this is how we often conceive of *humanity* in Russia, implying that Russian life, even in a camp, has more to offer in the way of pleasure than an American suburb. But does it not hold more danger for personal integrity than the simple, unassuming, inoffensive desire for well-being as practised in the supermarkets? To remain within Solzhenitsyn's categories, where is the true asceticism? In the subservience of the slave or in the decency of the citizen? It cannot be said that the Westerner is both unfortunate and lacking in courage; it is in order to retain his rights as a citizen that he bears with the impersonality of the legal system, with the coldness and distance which are essential if freedom is to be exercised. If he had realized this, Solzhenitsyn would have been more sympathetic to the moral crisis which has beset American society for over 15 years, a crisis which is borne bravely, but painfully, as it is the children who are worst hit, and which perhaps is being overcome at the very time he makes the same mundane accusations churned out by the press. He is being unfair when he com-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pares the exception in the USSR with the norm in America, the Solzhenitsynian hero with the housewife from Connecticut. "A fact which cannot be disputed is the weakening of human beings in the West while in the East they are becoming firmer and stronger. . . . Life's complexity and mortal weight have produced stronger, deeper and more interesting characters than those generated by standardized Western well-being." [1] Everyone is aware, however, with Vladimov, Erofeyev, Zinoviev and Solzhenitsyn himself, of the appalling degradation inflicted by the Soviet regime on human beings, with the average Soviet man down on all fours. We have not forgotten the chapters in *Gulag* on the "socially friendly" and on the appalling Soviet criminality. And here is the author of these chapters telling us that Western criminality is worse! Who are we to judge? Who is he to judge?

Does he appreciate how much firmness of purpose is required to live a decent life in this Western world? Unsatisfactory it may be, but at least it does not seek perfection, hence the legalistic structures as protection against the worst. As he does not understand what is meant by political life, he ascribes to a moral order, to an imaginary Western essence, what is inherent in a liberal and democratic system. If the West is so powerless against initiatives from the East, it is not so much that it is cowardly, or that it is the West, but that it is democratic and democracy is not the best system for conducting foreign policy. Our system is not the best, but it is the least evil possible in the present circumstances and the only one, moreover, which has some chance of resisting the charms of communism in a lasting fashion. Solzhenitsyn writes: "After the suffering of decades of violence and oppression, the human soul longs for things higher, warmer and purer than those offered by today's mass living habits in the West." This is all very well, but what things?

We can understand how it happens. The émigré leaves a world which is absolutely bad to find himself in a world which is relatively bad. For several centuries, this world has lived in a state of permanent crisis and self-criticism. There is no need for the émigré to formulate his own criticism of the Western world; it is handed to him on a plate when he arrives. "Its visiting-card," as Solzhenitsyn says, bears "the revolting invasion of publicity, TV stupor and intolerable music." In the first newspaper he sees, the émigré will read all the arguments to explain his disillusionment. He knows from experience that the lack of liberty is the worst of misfortunes. And he learns that freedom is accompanied neither by dignity nor by happiness. Is it possible to realize immediately, without a great deal of effort, that freedom includes the freedom to do wrong, that man cannot be expected to use his freedom wisely, nor freedom to engender anything other than freedom?

[1] The extracts from Solzhenitsyn's speech are taken from the English text released by Harvard University. (*Translator's note.*)

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is very tempting for the émigré to prefer to fall back on those theories already available, either from the West (cheap, journalistic, Club of Rome style theories) or from his own culture. Solzhenitsyn resorts to a theory of the constant degeneration of the West since the Renaissance (the Slavophiles dated it slightly earlier), when a primary Christian principle was abandoned. This theory could come from Berdyaev. As there had been no Renaissance in Russia, it was comforting for national pride to consider it harmful. But it is also giving in to Christian utopianism, past or future, which is not even Russian in origin, even in the version of "Holy Russia."

IN order to make my point clearer, I should like to mention a precedent, that of Herzen. This may be a poor precedent, as the rather harsh, restrictive regime of Nicholas I has nothing in common with the monstrosities of Leninism, nor does the figure of Herzen, somewhat marginal and superficial, have anything in common with the crucial, universal figure of Solzhenitsyn. Nevertheless, Herzen did represent one moment in the conscience of Russia.

Before his exile, Herzen had been a champion of law. He had exposed the pseudo-Slavophile lies surrounding the regime of Nicholas I. In exile, he created a network of activity and information. Far from isolating himself like Solzhenitsyn in Vermont, Herzen spoke all the languages, was a familiar presence in the salons of London and Paris, a friend of Hugo, Michelet, Mill, Mazzini, so much more of a European by culture and inclination. Then he became sickened by the West. In 1849 he wrote to his friends in Moscow:

> I do not know who could find in Europe today happiness or rest. . . . You saw sadness expressed in every line of my letters; life here is very hard, venomous malignity mingles with love, bile with tears, feverish anxiety infects the whole organism, the time of former illusions and hopes has passed. I believe in nothing here, except in a handful of people, a few ideas, and the fact that one cannot arrest the movement; I see the inevitable doom of old Europe and feel no pity for anything that now exists, neither the peaks of its culture nor its institutions. . . . And I stay . . . stay to suffer doubly, to suffer my own personal anguish and that of this world; which will perish, perhaps, to the sound of thunder and destruction towards which it is racing at full steam.[2]

There is no harm in quoting him at greater length, so consistent is the tone of despair.

> How can this world survive a social upheaval? In the name of what will it defend itself? Its religion is weakened. . . . The democratic principle is the cancer devouring it from within. A heavy,

[2] These extracts are taken from Moura Budberg's translation of *From the Other Shore* published by Weidenfeld and Nicoloson, 1956. (*Translator's note.*)

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> dull, stifling, weary disgust with life is spreading, and at the same time spasmodic attempts are made to find a way out of it all. Life has become miserable for everyone—that is in itself a great symptom (. . .) Everything shrinks and withers in this exhausted soil: there is no talent, no creation, no strength of mind, no strength of will. This world has outlived the age of its glory. The age of Schiller and Goethe has passed away, like the age of Raphael and Michelangelo, the age of Voltaire and Rousseau, of Mirabeau and Danton. The brilliant age of industry is over, like the brilliant age of aristocracy before it (. . .) People shrink into themselves, tremble and live like shopkeepers; the habits of the bourgeoisie have become universal. No one settles down, everything is temporary, borrowed, unstable (. . .) Repent, sirs, repent! Your day of judgement has arrived.

When Herzen was writing this the nineteenth century was but half-way through and not only was Europe far from exhausted, but Russia itself was on the verge of experiencing the only rapid development of its history (on European lines, moreover). Herzen, blinded by his disillusionment, fails to see it. The one thing he fears above all for his country is that it will adopt the democratic model of Europe and America. Like Solzhenitsyn, it is in contrast with a West he dislikes that he finds himself admiring his own country:

> Let us tell about . . . a people which has somehow miraculously contrived to preserve itself under the yoke of Mongol hordes and German bureaucrats, under the barrack-room discipline of the corporal's baton, and the degrading Tartar knout; which has retained the noble features, the lively mind and the generous sweep of a rich nature beneath the yoke of serfdom.

From the Other Shore develops the reasoning the germ of which is also discernible in the Harvard speech; it is no worse in our country, only different. And as it is different and the West is bad, it is therefore better. Or, as Saltykov-Shchedrin wrote, "It is better because the suffering is greater." Once this point is reached it is difficult to avoid hoping for another purifying catastrophe, and crying, like Herzen: "Long live chaos and destruction! *Vive la mort*! And may the future triumph!" as long as this future belongs to Russia. . . . "Everywhere impotence, meanness and mediocrity and, in the east, a barely perceptible thread of light, with its hint of distant dawn, before the breaking of which many a thunder cloud would burst."

We should stop here. Solzhenitsyn has not taken this nihilist, destructive step and there is no evidence to suppose that he ever will. And let us not, by quoting Herzen alongside Solzhenitsyn, lend credence to that disastrously erroneous theory of the continuity of Russia and the USSR, of a Russia repeating itself in perpetuity. The only point in common is not the situation, but that two radically different situations are perceived from the same cultural viewpoint, from that

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

deceptive kink in Russian culture which can distort the vision even of Solzhenitsyn.

But, I repeat, the situation is not the same. Herzen was dealing with a somewhat inflexible *ancien régime* from which Europe had already freed itself, at least as long as Europe remained out of range of the tsar's army. Russia could be frightening, but the Russian regime itself presented no threat. Solzhenitsyn is dealing with a communist regime whose aspirations are global. Herzen attempted to gain Europe's sympathy for the misfortunes of his country. Solzhenitsyn uses every opportunity to try to make us understand the misfortunes in store for us.

It is here that our interpretation of the Harvard speech reaches its limits. It judges Solzhenitsyn. But, by changing our point of view, we see how easily it can fall under the judgement Solzhenitsyn makes of us.

When they expelled Solzhenitsyn, after having kept him confined for so long, the authorities knew what they were doing. They were aware of the logic of his intellectual position. They knew that by this logic he would lose patience with the West and the West would lose patience with him. Isolated from the East by exile, isolated in the West by mutual incomprehension, he ceases to be a threat. He has been outmanoeuvred. In the last year or two, there have been hundreds of analyses similar to my own, both in the USSR and in Europe, in Russian and a score of other languages. These are in line with what the authorities had predicted. In a certain sense, they were planned. Maybe in fact routine communism is preferable to refurbished Russian nationalism? Maybe, on the whole, Brezhnev is less disturbing than Solzhenitsyn?

WE must, however, understand Solzhenitsyn's basic intention. It is not to construct a theory on Russia, on the West or even on communism. It is to use every available means to warn the West of one thing: that this communism, which you fail to understand, whose nature you cannot possibly imagine, is threatening you. Do not think that all you have to fear is the straightforward expansion of the USSR. Communism is not something external, it is inherent in your civilization, which is also our civilization. It has triumphed in Russia, as Russia was more vulnerable, but it was not born in Russia. The forces which brought communism to power in Russia are the same which racked Europe in the nineteenth century, and which now more than ever are at work all over the world. This anti-life is feeding on your substance. If it devours you entirely, you will be to blame.

But what language can he use to formulate this speech? It cannot be the language of Pushkin and Akhmatova, a civilized and civilizing language, created to express a common humanity, Russian and European. What has to be conveyed is the feeling of an essential difference, an absolute antagonism between us and " them," of the arrival on this

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

earth of a species from outer space, of an imminent "encounter of the third kind." And here the Slavophile style, the Dostoevskian style—with its prophecies of doom and its essential dichotomies—obviously lends itself. Of course, this style is the vehicle for all sorts of erroneous and even dangerous ideas, ideas which aggravate the threat they are warning us against. But does Solzhenitsyn have another style at his disposal?

It is Solzhenitsyn's destiny that misfortune be always asssociated with his greatness. To acquire a new vision he had to be deported. And today, he cannot communicate that vision without being, like Cassandra, misunderstood. There is certainly a degree of intellectual laziness which makes many Russians (even the most energetic man of his century) put their trust in approximations and in concepts which are the more misleading for appearing to be true. But how great is our own laziness which prevents us from deciphering a speech because it contains some fables! *De te fabula narratur.*

Translated by Elizabeth Winter

THE WORLD TODAY

The monthly journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs provides the general reader with up-to-date and authoritative information on current world problems.

Recent issues include:

Michael Hodges	The legacy of the Treaty of Rome: a Community of equals?
Dennis Duncanson	China's Vietnam war: new and old strategic imperatives
Patrick Seale	The Egypt-Israel Treaty and its implications
Wolf Mendl	China's challenge to Japan
Mohammed Ayoob	The super-powers and regional 'stability': parallel responses to the Gulf and the Horn
Elaine Windrich	The Anglo-American initiative on Rhodesia: an interim assessment

Annual subscription: (including postage)
UK £7
US $20 (by accelerated surface mail)
Elsewhere £9

Orders may be sent to booksellers and newsagents or to the **Oxford University Press,** Press Road, Neasden, London NW10 0DD (Tel. 01-450 8080)

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Comintern—60 Years After: Reflections on the Anniversary*

Walter Kendall

OFFICIAL communist orthodoxy asserts that the Communist International, and with it the communist parties around the world, were established as a result of the "betrayal" of the "world revolution" by the socialist movement in 1914 and the years thereafter. No social myth could be farther removed from the truth. Lenin, from the very beginning, wished the Bolshevik Party to rule alone. An enforced coalition government of Bolsheviks and Left Social Revolutionaries ended in March 1918 at the time of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Thereafter the Bolsheviks instituted their own system of one-party rule and in fact, if not always in name, declared all other political organizations illegal. Once the Bolsheviks had declared illegal and destroyed all rival socialist parties at home in Russia it became quite impossible for them to accept the legitimacy of other rival, non-Bolshevik socialist organizations abroad. What was denied in the one case could not at all be conceded in the other. The foundation of a Bolshevik International thus became necessary, not as Lenin and the Bolshevik leaders came to deceive themselves, in "the interests of world revolution," but as an external support required to buttress their own increasingly arbitrary rule at home.

Tsarist absolutism and serfdom (abolished in Russia only in 1861) had left their mark on the Russian people, just as to this day slavery, ended in the Deep South around the same time, continues to scar both whites and negroes, indeed the whole of political life in the USA. The "world revolution" which the Bolshevik leaders had expected would rescue their *coup d'état* from isolation failed to mature. The leaders of the Communist Party found themselves marooned like shipwrecked mariners on Russian soil, forced to resort to desperate measures in order to survive. So it came about that in a perverse manner the mentality of the *subjects* came to decide the modes by which their *masters* might rule. The Bolshevik leaders found it necessary to clamp ever tighter bonds on all those who shared in the privilege and power of one-party rule. Ineluctably, heresy hunts in Russia and the "Cult," first of the "Party," then of the individual party "Leader," engendered identical manifestations in all the carbon copies of the Russian Communist Party which the Comintern had established around the globe. Once the Bolsheviks had come to see mass

* © Walter Kendall 1979. This article is an edited extract from Walter Kendall's forthcoming book, *World Revolution: The Russian Revolution and the Communist International, 1898–1935.*

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

terror as an obligatory tool of social reconstruction the communist parties abroad could do no other than adopt similar views and where feasible practise them, in Russia's train. The failure of the "world revolution" to develop as foretold by "Leninist" theology caused the world communist movement, for a whole historical epoch, to transform itself into a kind of epic folk theatre, acting out on a global stage, for the benefit of Russia's rulers and their subjects, the roles which Leninist theology assigned the masses, but which they, for their own very good reasons, refused to carry out.

All great revolutions provoke their echoes in other countries around the world. The English revolution, the French, the American, each has left its mark on the literature, the institutions, the ideology, the language, the modes of behaviour, which both condition and express our understanding of the world in which we live. The same holds true of both Russian revolutions of 1917. The Bolshevik rulers, unlike their predecessors however, were not content to rely on spontaneous forces which existed independently and outside their control. Accordingly, once having displaced the post-tsarist Provisional Government by their *coup d'état* in November 1917, the Bolsheviks, isolated, threatened and alone, stretched every nerve to mobilize support abroad, to rally it to their aid.

The March Revolution and the abdication of the Tsar were a consequence of the Russian Government's inability any longer to continue a bloody and useless war which no longer commanded any large measure of public support. The Bolshevik *coup d'état* would have been impossible had not Allied pressure and the expenditure of large sums on a pro-war psychological warfare operation dissuaded the Provisional Government from concluding peace and caused it instead to launch an ill-judged offensive which during July 1917 broke the back of the Russian Army on the Eastern Front. The Bolshevik coup could never have succeeded if the Germans during the preceding months had not launched their own psychological warfare operation, on a similar scale, in favour of a negotiated peace and had the Bolshevik Party itself not benefited greatly from financial subsidies of German origin. Nor could the Bolsheviks have maintained themselves in power thereafter had it not been for German support. This demonstrably continued at least until March 1918 and most probably for some months beyond. The destiny of the March revolution and the fate of the Provisional Government, were decided by great power rivalries and by psychological warfare operations instigated by the combatant powers, fought out on Russian soil. The destruction of the Kerensky regime in Russia was accomplished in much the same fashion as that of the Allende regime in Chile some 60 years later.

The success of the Bolshevik coup was due in large measure to German support. The Bolshevik leaders were well aware of this fact. Accordingly they drew the understandable conclusion that if Russian

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bolsheviks might make a revolution in Russia with *German* money, German Bolsheviks might make a revolution in Germany with *Russian* money in much the same way. The export of revolution, not only to Germany, but also to other countries, thus became a cardinal feature of Bolshevik foreign policy from the very beginning.

At Brest-Litovsk between December 1917 and February 1918, Trotsky, as Foreign Minister, sought to use the Russo-German armistice negotiations as a platform from which to provoke revolution amongst soldiers and civilians of the Central, also the Allied, Powers. Even after Brest-Litovsk, Bolshevik diplomacy continued its endeavours to provoke abroad revolts which might ease the desperate pressures to which the regime was subject at home. Thus in Germany, Joffe, the Russian ambassador, and the whole embassy staff were expelled for their part in encouraging and financing subversion, and this only three days before the Germans' November revolution actually took place.

Trotsky, during his period as Commissar, had established a Bureau of International Revolutionary Propaganda at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Initiated under Trotsky in 1917–18, this department continued to function under Chicherin, his successor, all through 1918 and on into 1919.

Revolution was thus inextricably associated with Russian foreign policy from the very start. Russia's new rulers, from the very beginning, considered that their security depended on the ability to rally support for their aims and objectives abroad. Even after the revolutionary regime was stabilized the Bureau for International Revolutionary Propaganda continued its work, albeit under another name.

The Bolshevik Party, as the directing brain of the post revolutionary state, itself initiated the work of the Bureau for International Revolutionary Propaganda. The department was staffed partly by Russian communists, partly by émigrés, returned from abroad and now Russian party members, and partly by nationals of foreign countries who had given their allegiance to the new regime. Quite independently, the Bolshevik Party also set up, on Russian soil, its own Federation of Foreign Communist Groups. This Federation was composed in the main of prisoners of war who had gone over to the Bolsheviks, also of individuals of foreign nationality, resident for one reason or another on Russian soil. Included were English-American, French, German, Czech, Hungarian, Rumanian, Bulgarian and Finnish sections. The Federation was a part of the Communist Party of Russia. All Federation members were bound by Russian party discipline. It was on these pre-existing foundations, in March 1919, at the instigation of the Communist Party of Russia, that the Communist International was founded.

THE Communist International claimed to be the inheritor of the best traditions of the First and the Second Internationals to

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which Marx and Engels, each in his own way, had given a blessing. Yet the First and the Second Internationals had been associations of equals, ranged around a series of programmatic demands upon which the adherents were substantially agreed. The Communist "International" by contrast set out to be a unified organization, directed from a single centre, basing its policies and forms of organization directly on those of the Communist Party of Russia.

In form the national "sections" of the Comintern, each of which was to take the name "Communist" after that of the founding party in Russia, were all to be equals. In real life such equality never rose above the level of conventional myth. The Russian Party not only founded the "International" and gave it a name, it also provided the treasury. Further it largely staffed and directed the headquarters which were domiciled on Russian territory in Moscow. More, the leaders of the Communist Party of Russia actually believed that in their own experience they had uncovered all the basic "laws" of social revolution. Accordingly, now that the "science of revolution" had reached "maturity" all that there remained for others to do, was to study, learn from and apply the lessons of the Russian example.

Fundamental to this view was the illusion that in the structure of the Bolshevik Party the Russians had discovered the *only* form of political organization able to lead the "proletariat" to victory in the social revolution. The "International" accordingly had to be organized as a *facsimile* of the Russian party, as did the national "sections," the communist parties of the world. Since the Russian leaders sat on all the "leading committees" of the "International" with what amounted to a decisive voice, the ultimate, if not entirely intended, effect was to turn the national parties into little more than local units of the Communist Party of Russia.

The Bolsheviks had conducted the November coup under the illusion that the "masses" everywhere would rally to their aid and rapidly rescue them from isolation. The expected apocalypse was not forthcoming. The Bolsheviks were left stranded high and dry. Their *coup d'état*, based as it was on a whole set of fallacious assumptions, now proved misplaced. The early Christians found themselves in a similar dilemma when Christ failed to return a second time. The Bolsheviks too, in their turn, came to convince themselves that their prognosis had been correct, that it was only the time scale of their prophecies that had been at error. Little by little the external constraints imposed by the Russian environment transmuted Bolshevism from the programme of a utopian revolutionary sect into the political system whereby a tiny, unrepresentative "socialist" minority maintained its arbitrary rule over the captive citizens of the Russian Republic. The phenomenon was not at all a new one. Three centures earlier the Jesuit Order had ruled in just this fashion over the conquered Indians of Paraguay. The Bolsheviks began as a group united by faith. Like the

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jesuits they hardened into a privileged oligarchy, one recruited and maintained not on the basis of *class*, but of *belief*.[1]

The Marxian economic analysis from which the Bolsheviks derived their original understanding of Russian society dealt with classes rather than with castes. In such texts, the Bolshevik leaders, the Bolshevik Party, found no adequate warning of the process of transformation from revolutionary sect to secular priestly caste that they were forced to undergo. The process once complete, the Bolshevik Party, like the tsarist autocracy beforehand, came to rule the Russian people much as a colonial administration rules a conquered territory. The Party, like the Tsar before it, never failed to express the highest moral concern for the welfare of Russia's subject people. This did not prevent it administering its domain, organizing the national resources and ruling the population solely in its own interests, not at all those of the people themselves. The Bolsheviks thus conquered Russia while understanding "socialism" to have one meaning. Once in power, almost unwittingly, they came to attribute to it quite another.

These developments, forced upon the Bolshevik Party by the circumstances of its rule in Russia, through the apparatus of the Communist International, found their necessary reflection in the life and activity of every communist party in the world. No national communist party was subject to the same external environmental constraints as the "master" Communist Party ruling in Russia. Yet the constitution of the Comintern, enforced upon all its "national sections" the duty to act as if it were, just the same. Thus the "foreign communist parties" too began by giving socialism one meaning and ended by giving it quite another.

Lenin's faction, which Trotsky as early as 1904 had termed an "orthodox theocracy," thus gave birth to the great secular religion of the twentieth century. Bolshevism begins as an obscure cult gathered around the person of a messianic leader, grows into a state party governing a domain of imperial dimensions. When we study these developments it is as if, suddenly, there had been made available for consultation by the historian of Christianity, not only the persons, but also the biographies, the autobiographies, the verbatim texts of the sermons of Christ, Peter and the Apostles, together with eyewitness accounts of the miracles, not to mention the newly opened archives of the secret political police of the Roman Empire.

What we are faced with in each case is the elevation of certain very ordinary events—in the case of the Roman Empire that of the crucifixion of one little known individual; in the case of the Russian Empire that of a palace coup, Latin American style—into historic myth, and

[1] In Paraguay, as my friend Frank Ridley once remarked, there existed from one point of view a true utopia since "The Indians did all the work, whilst the Jesuits spent all the money." One devout French Christian had discovered in Paraguay a more perfect *socialist* society than that which exists in Russia. For the account: C. Lugon, *La République des Guaranis* (Paris, 1970).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their subsequent development, by forces quite beyond their control, into " cults " of global dimensions.

Much of the attractive power of the Bolshevik *coup d'état*, the " Russian Revolution " as it mistakenly appeared to so many in other lands, lay in its apocalyptic quality, the semi-religious promise it gave of a new world rising phoenix-like out of the ashes of the old. In retrospect the utopian hopes engendered by " 1917 " appear at best disconcertingly naïve. It is indeed difficult to resist the conviction that for most of the Bolshevik leaders their early high hopes came rapidly to fade.

In the nature of things, the administration of the territory of the former tsarist empire, the maintenance of order in that vast domain and the arbitrary suppression of all who offered resistance to the new authority absorbed by far the greater part of the energies of the Bolshevik leaders. Zinoviev might indeed be the " leader " of the Communist International. Yet his authority derived less from the world proletariat than from his position as Communist Party Secretary, holding Petrograd, Russia's most important city, in something like personal or party fief. Trotsky might appear to some abroad as the Comintern's incomparable tribune of the world revolution. Yet by any test his governmental functions—as Russian Foreign Minister and as Commander in Chief of the Russian Army successively conferred on him far more power, far more authority, than ever his Comintern career did. Lenin's time, of necessity, was almost totally absorbed in holding the hastily reconstructed Russian state apparatus together, in devising the tricks and stratagems required to ensure the day-to-day survival of the Bolshevik regime. As the weight of Russian reality bore heavily on the shoulders of the Bolshevik leaders, so too, from the very beginning it weighed heavily on the Communist International. The " party of the world revolution " was first and foremost the " party of the government of Russia". Given the circumstances, it could never have been otherwise.

AT 60 years distance one is prone to forget the extent to which the revolution which dethroned the Tsar took the Bolshevik leaders, the Bolshevik Party, totally by surprise. In 1916 Bukharin was living in Scandinavia, within one day's journey of Russian soil. In October of that year, Bukharin bade Lenin farewell, abandoned Europe altogether and emigrated to the United States. Bukharin was soon hired to work as a professional journalist, becoming editorial secretary of a Russian language socialist daily newspaper in New York. Like many other Russian émigrés, Bukharin was quickly launched on a new career in the USA. Trotsky was expelled from France to Spain late in 1916. Socialist comrades cleared the road for him to travel through Italy to take refuge in neutral Switzerland. Trotsky chose instead to follow Bukharin across the Atlantic, to embark like him on a new

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

life in the United States. Once arrived Trotsky quickly settled into a very comfortable apartment complete with "electric light, gas cooking range, bath, telephone, automatic service elevator and even a chute for the garbage." Met by Bukharin on the day of arrival, Trotsky was hired to work alongside him on the paper *Novyi Mir*. Lenin and Zinoviev were at this time in Switzerland. Only weeks before the Tsar was toppled from his throne Lenin publicly put on record the view that "the revolution" was not to be expected in his lifetime. If Trotsky and Bukharin had felt differently it is difficult to imagine that they would have sailed for New York, almost at the very moment that revolution was about to break out in Russia. As for the Bolshevik Party, it seems to have been on the verge of dissolution. That it played no part at all in the overthrow of the Tsar, even its own official Stalinist historians seem to be agreed.[2]

It is easy to forget too, that the revolutionism of Russia's new rulers was sometimes as much forced upon them from without as freely decided upon from within. In 1918 Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolshevik Party were all prepared to accept British and French aid the better to pursue the war against Germany. The Communist International was launched in March 1919 at least in part because Russia, shut out of the Versailles Treaty negotiations, was trying to force her way in. When that endeavour failed Russia opposed Versailles, denounced the League of Nations as a "League of Robbers," then negotiated at Rapallo a treaty intended to divert the forces of German nationalism westwards against France and Britain. In the mid-thirties when Russia was once accepted into the League of Nations, the Comintern, as an independent arm of state policy, was downgraded almost to nothing. Had the visitors at Versailles been more far-sighted, had they been prepared to grant the *de facto* government of Russia a place at the conference table, the Communist International, and with it the communist parties in each country, as we know them today, might never have been born at all.

ONCE established, the Comintern, like any other bureaucratic organism, engendered a momentum all its own. The communist parties and the Comintern sprang from the Bolshevik *coup d'état* which followed the Russian revolution of March 1917. The Comintern's distinctive ideology ("Lenin-ism"), its first leaders, ideologues, organizers and propagandists, were Russian citizens, members of the Communist Party of Russia, almost to a man. Through the Comintern, the Russian forms of organization, the Russian ideological stance (together with the factional disputes of the Russian leaders), the modes of operation of the Russian state, the interests of its rulers, were all

[2] Trotsky arrived in New York on 13 January 1917. For a Bolshevik acknowledgment of the Bolsheviks' failure to play a part in the March uprising which overthrew the Tsar, see "*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B)*," pp. 174–76 (Moscow, 1941).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

grafted onto sections of the trade union and socialist movement in every country in the world. In the end, after massive injections of money and other forms of material support, the communist parties, if puny, become none the less forces in their own right.

The injection of "Moscow Gold" (it was indeed sometimes "gold" but more often diamonds, stock certificates or more simply foreign currency) was essential to the formation of the communist parties, as we now know them, in each country. The new tsars, like the old, expended money lavishly abroad to buttress their political friends, to subvert and destroy their critics and opponents.

That the communist parties should now deny this is strange, given that they boasted of it triumphantly at the time. The principle in any case was not a new one. In Britain's case at least cash subsidies to allies had played a crucial role in the conduct of all her foreign wars. One may say of the link between Lenin, Russia and the "world revolution" what has been written elsewhere of the relationship between T. E. Lawrence, British imperialism, and the "risings" of the tribes of Arabia in 1914–18. "Lawrence could certainly not have done what he did without gold, but no one else could have done it with ten times the amount." [3] In the one case as in the other, the gold was a *necessary*, but not in itself a *sufficient*, condition.

The communist parties took the form they did because of gold, but not for that reason alone. The precondition for the effectiveness of external aid was the division in the socialist ranks caused by the outbreak of the First World War, the widespread disillusion with formal political processes that the war brought about and the near disintegration of whole areas of European society that followed the conclusion of hostilities. In such circumstances whole layers of the socialist movement came to *want to believe* in Russia. Allegiance was first given to the *fact* of the Russian Revolution, through it to the leaders of the Russian state, through them to the Communist International and through the Comintern to the communist parties which were the organs serving the interest of the "Revolution" in the outside world.[4] The *act of faith came first*, the discovery of reasons for belief came only later. In scarcely a single case did adherence spring from prior rational analysis, from intellectual conviction of the validity of Bolshevik "principles" which in any case were largely unknown at that time. The process of conversion *began* with an act of faith: it was followed by a series of "rationalizations" couched in the Marxoid-Leninoid jargon of that day.

If only for this reason all the "True Communist" dissenters were

[3] I am indebted to Harry McElroy for this quotation. The source is "AWL" quoted "Clouds Hill," National Trust Guide to T. E. Lawrence's cottage in Dorset, pp. 7–8.

[4] Thus a contemporary observer: "the chief appeal that Soviet Russia makes to the imagination of socialists is... the appeal to fact.... A governing class has been destroyed..." M. Reckitt, *The Meaning of National Guilds*, p. 215 (London, 1920).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

doomed from the very beginning.[5] The communist parties sprang from the "Institutional Revolutionary Party" of the Russian state, its base as secure in Moscow as that of the Catholic Church in Rome. Those who broke discipline might at best, like Luther and like Trotsky, end by establishing a new schismatic Church of their own. All their hopes to refashion the original Church in their own image were never more than self-delusion. The only real battles for the control of the Comintern were fought out in Moscow amongst the Russian leaders. To the victors, the Comintern and the loyalty of all the communist parties came as part of the spoil.

THE Comintern attracted to itself, from the very earliest years, individuals of widely differing types. Their characteristics varied greatly from place to place, from nation to nation. In the United States, to quote one example, the Communist Party was until the 1930s composed almost entirely of the foreign-born: foreign-speaking recruits from the language federations of the Socialist Party of the United States.[6] In a similar fashion considerations of nationalism, foreign policy alignment and Slav affiliation influenced the recruitment of "cadres" in all the border territories of the Russian state. Communist party policy in such territories—as the formation of "communist" puppet governments in the wake of the invading Russian armies in Poland in 1920, in Finland in 1940, in Poland again in 1944–45, made plain—could not be separated from those of the Russian state.

The communist parties succeeded too in attracting individuals from opposite ends of the social spectrum. Comfortably-off, professional, middle class intellectuals at one extreme, anarchistically inclined proletarian elements at the other.

The intellectuals were courted by the Russian Party, the Comintern apparatus, from the very beginning. Leninist dogma held that consciousness could only be brought to the working class from without. "Inevitably" it was upon such middle-class elements that the "leadership" of the assault on bourgeois society, the "construction" thereafter of the "new order" must depend. It was precisely individuals from such social strata that constituted the "leading cadres" of the Bolshevik Party in Russia. That many of their counterparts in other countries should be attracted to the Communist International was in the circumstances not surprising.

Every communist party required its quota of logic-chopping, time-

[5] Trotsky, it should be remembered, was always a "Papal Pretender," never an "Anti-Pope."

[6] In the 1920s "87% of our communists were members of foreign-language federations and of the 1750 in the English speaking branches, the majority were foreign-born who spoke their English with a decided foreign accent." On this see B. Gitlow, *I Confess*, p. 216 (New York, 1939).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

serving, "Marxist-Leninist" journalists and theologians[7]—"dialecticians," able to prove by erudite quotation and *ex post facto* argument, that in Russia, as in the world of Candide, "all was for the best, in this the best of all possible worlds," men able convincingly to prove that whatever the Comintern proposed today, however different this was from what was proposed the day before, it was nonetheless the true "revolutionary" policy, its lineage indubitably derived from the canonical fathers of Bolshevism. Hardly praiseworthy, such talents continue to leave their mark on the socialist movement up to the present day.

The renewal of medieval scholasticism in a "Leninist" guise was one innovation introduced into the socialist movement by Bolshevism. The seduction of anarchist elements, the transformation of their drive for liberty into the service of authoritarianism, was another.

The anarcho-syndicalists pointed out, whole decades before Lenin and the Bolsheviks, that the revolutionary pretensions of social democracy had been greatly exaggerated. The bureaucratic structures and largely reformist aims of the socialist parties, the anarcho-syndicalists contended, were greatly at odds with their professed revolutionary objectives. Accordingly the anarcho-syndicalists declared war on "compromise," sought "revolution" rather than "reform" as a direct and immediate road to the achievement of a *fully libertarian society*.

Bolshevism was able to "take over" a very large part of these attitudes and re-direct them to its own purposes. Bolshevism *claimed* that the "revolution" in Russia was already complete. Here the libertarian "classless society" was already in process of formation. The "world revolution," as anarchists and others had long asserted, truly *was* on the order of the day. The "masses" innately willing, were held back, "betrayed," "misled," by the social democratic "labour lieutenants of capital" who held them in thrall. Accordingly the Comintern sought to enlist under its banner all the libertarian, anti-authoritarian sentiment of the anarcho-syndicalist left, the better to unleash it as a weapon against social democracy in all its guises. The Russian state, the Russian Communist Party, the Comintern, the communist parties, all of course were far more "bureaucratic" than social democracy ever was. Yet in their case these failings were to be exempted from criticism by the "historic myth" of the "Russian Revolution." They were in any case to be explained away by the demonic nature of "capitalist encirclement," by the regrettable, but nonetheless "necessary" authoritarian features of the Bolshevik regime that this involved.

[7] "I had returned [from Moscow] to France in October 1921.... In the Communist Party and on *L'Humanité* most of the leaders and editorial staff [formerly members of the socialist party] had remained in the Party out of self-interest rather than conviction." Rosmer, *Lenin's Moscow*, p. 143 (London, 1971).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN the 1970s Russia is no longer the only nation in which the Leninist cult holds state power. Communist governments also rule in seven countries in Central and Eastern Europe: Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania and Yugoslavia. "Eurocommunism" in part represents a reflection in the West of the varying degrees of independence manifested by Russia's border states in the East.

Yet the long-term objective of the communist "leaders" in the West certainly continues to be to assert their "hegemony," to assimilate to themselves all political power, to rule in the Russian manner. Exactly for this reason the "Eurocommunist" parties continue to organize themselves on the same para-military lines as the Communist Party which rules in Russia, as its facsimiles which rule in Eastern Europe. Inside each "Eurocommunist" party all power continues to be tightly held in the hands of a salaried, highly bureaucratic, party apparatus. The "Eurocommunist" leaders have their hearts set on a monopoly of political power on the Eastern European model. Yet no more than their counterparts in Eastern Europe do they wish to be totally subordinate to Moscow's arbitrary will.[8] It is an essential part of this process that the "Bolshevik myth" itself, in part at least, has come to fade. Even in the highest echelons of the communist parties there begins to become manifest a belated recognition that Russian society provides no "ideal model" for socialism, a consequent insistence that not all the *obiter dicta* of the Moscow Cardinals shall be universally obligatory elsewhere. Alongside this goes the emergence of public declarations, in which truth and falsehood are inextricably mixed, that in communist eyes, "Revolution," the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (read Communist Party) are no longer to be considered the prerequisite for the transition to socialism.

A surprising number of well-read, well-informed political commentators appear to find these propositions original. They are of course nothing of the sort. These were precisely the issues over which the communist parties *split away* from the socialist movement in the first place, more than half a century ago. These positions, belatedly being adopted by the "Eurocommunist" parties, are exactly those which socialists, over more than 60 years, fought to defend against a communist onslaught of unprecedented fury and duration.

Since the Comintern and the communist parties without exception were Russian in origin from the very beginning, those "Eurocommunists" who no longer believe in Russia find themselves in a situation analogous to those Christians, theologians, clerics and laymen alike, who no longer believe in the divinity of Christ. The system of belief, the attitude of mind, the dogma, the ritual, the liturgy, the organiza-

[8] For this insight into the "Eurocommunist" phenomenon I am indebted to my friend David Goldey of Lincoln College, Oxford.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tional structure, the salaried posts, the sentimental associations all linger on. Every rational reason for their existence has vanished long ago. Once the belief in the Universality of the Russian Revolution, the Leninist Model, has disappeared, all reason for communist belief in its twentieth century form vanishes altogether.

CENTRO DE RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES

Revista RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES

Octubre–Diciembre 1977

VOL. V NUEVA EPOCA No. 19

SUMARIO

Artículos

Irene Zea Prado.—Relaciones México-Estados Unidos: sus primeras impresiones (La gestión de Anthony Butler, segundo embajador de los Estados Unidos en México: 1829–1836).

Jesús Cambre Mariño.—Puerto Rico, nación secuestrada.

Andrés Ventosa de Campo.—El fascismo y el futuro del Pacto Andino.

Leopoldo González Aguayo.—Notas sobre el sistema de relaciones internacionales de América Latina.

Notas y Comentarios

René Avilés Fábila.—Belice y el derecho a la autodeterminación.

Alejandro Gil Recasens.—La crísis política del socialismo yugoslavo.

Documentos

Comunicado conjunto mexicano-soviético.

Cronologías

Cronología de los principales acontecimientos de la política exterior de México del 1° de julio al 30 de septiembre de 1977.

Cronología de los principales acontecimientos de la política internacional de América Latina del 1° de julio al 30 de septiembre de 1977.

Toda correspondencia relativa a la venta o suscripción de Relaciones Internacional, debe ser dirigida a Servi-Libros, Apartado Postal 25–328, México 13, D.F. Teléfono: 530 26 06.

Precio de la Revista:

Número suelto:	$ 25.00 M.N.
Subscripción anual	$ 100.00 M.N.
Subscripción anual correo aéreo:	$ 130.00 M.N.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Comintern—The Early Years; The Sixth Congress and the American CP*

Bertram D. Wolfe

THE First Congress of the Comintern was a mere sham or charade. Lenin was so sure that the Russian Revolution (his seizure of power) was going to spread to Poland and Germany and become a world revolution that, never scrupulous as to means so long as they served his sacred end, he did not mind how he scraped together the 34 or 35 persons to make up the simulacrum of a founding congress. Of these people, with the exclusion of the Russians, only three represented embryonic or genuine mass parties, two of which were left-wing Social-Democratic organizations with no instructions on founding a new International. The third, the German Hugo Eberlein, carried genuine instructions to oppose unyielding the formation of a new International at that time. All the others were either Russian Bolsheviks or residents in Russia, mostly as prisoners of war or by accident. America was "represented" by Boris Reinstein and Siebald Justius Rutgers. Reinstein had been delegated by the Socialist Labour Party of America to go not to Moscow but to Stockholm for an all-socialist conference on peace terms. He was promptly expelled by the S.L.P. for having permitted his name and the name of their party to be used in the Bolshevik charade. S. J. Rutgers was a member of the Dutch left-wing Socialist minority party who "represented" not only America, because he had been living there during the war, but also Holland and Japan, in which last country he had lived only a few months and had not even mastered the Japanese tongue. France was represented for three days by Captain Jacques Sadoul who had been sent to the tsar's army as a liaison officer and while there had become pro-Bolshevik. But on the fourth and last day of the founding congress he had been stripped of his mandate because of the arrival of the anti-war Henri Guilbeaux, and all five French votes were given to Guilbeaux. Angelica Balabanoff, whom Lenin was to select, to her surprise, as Secretary of the Communist International and who put morals above politics, tried in vain to warn Lenin that Guilbeaux was an untrustworthy person. She broke with Lenin in 1920 on moral grounds and received from him a generous credential praising her work and person, to carry her safely out of Russia. Guilbeaux ended up pro-Nazi. England was represented only by a Russian Jew named Joseph Fineberg, who had lived for some time in England, had been a member of the British Socialist Party, and was working as

* This is an extract from the autobiography of Bertram D. Wolfe which we publish with the kind permission of his widow, Ella Wolfe.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

British expert and translator in Chicherin's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. He remained faithful to the Comintern, became a translator of Lenin's works, was tortured under Stalin, having all his teeth knocked out during "interrogations," and was then rehabilitated and given a new set of stainless steel teeth, after which he returned to the translation of Lenin.

Other delegates were picked by Lenin (officially, by the Russian Central Committee) from small nations in the Russian empire, such as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Finland. All of them were personally known to Lenin and had supported the Bolsheviks in the internecine feuds in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. For the Swiss, Lenin appointed Fritz Platten, one of the important intermediaries between him and the German General Staff during his trip through the German lines to Russia. Platten died in prison under Stalin, but was rehabilitated on what would have been his 80th birthday. Angelica Balabanoff received a note from Lenin during the first or second session reading: "Please take the floor and announce the affiliation of the Italian Socialist Party to the Third International," but on the same scrap of paper she wrote back: "I cannot do it . . . they must speak for themselves."

From Sweden and Norway there were real delegates, but they came from pacifist, left-leaning socialist parties, with instructions to discuss only the Stockholm conference and early "socialist" peace. Most of the others were prisoners of war who were delighted to be elevated into "delegates" from their lands. When Angelica Balabanoff refused to pretend to represent the Italian Party, Lenin selected two Italian prisoners of war and gave them the title of delegate, personal credentials, and large sums of money, so that they would go back to Italy and split the mass Socialist Party. Again Angelica protested, pointing out that the two men were ignorant and unscrupulous and did not even know the vocabulary of socialism. "For the destruction of Turati's Party," he answered, "they are good enough." However, she was right. They kept the huge sums for themselves and squandered most of the money in the bars and brothels of Milan.

But the land, the party and the delegate to which Lenin devoted all his attention were those of Germany. If he and Trotsky had sent their Red Army into the Ukraine it was not merely to reconquer that rich grain producing and industrial portion of the tsar's empire but no less to have the army near to Germany for a flank attack on the Allied armies that would, he was sure, invade Germany to crush the communist revolution there. So later, against Trotsky's better judgment, Lenin would send his army against Poland. As late as 1924, when I got to the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, I could still see strong and precise three-dimensional relief maps of Germany in every barracks I visited.

In Germany there was the Spartacus Group under the leadership of

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, Leo Jogiches, and Paul Levi. If Lenin could get them, against Rosa Luxemburg's will and judgment, to form a Communist Party without waiting to win the mass of the German working class, and if he could get them to start an uprising, he was sure that the *élan* of his Party and power would make them victorious. With that victory and the union of German industry and technology with Russian Revolution, his revolution would become irresistibly a world revolution. But all four leaders, under the influence of Rosa Luxemburg's respect for the will of the masses, had opposed an immediate break with the socialist-minded German working class. Indeed, in the elections for a Constituent Assembly and Workers' and Soldiers' *Räte* (councils or "soviets") the Spartacans had not won a single delegate in all Germany. All four of the Spartacans' outstanding leaders were agreed that it was premature to form a German Communist Party or a new International. They must first win the support and understanding of the masses that figured so centrally in Luxemburg's writings and in her polemics with Lenin. That was the principal difference between a mass party in a country where one could recruit and convert freely, and a little conspiratorial party of professional revolutionaries such as Lenin had formed.

When a fresh group of young men flooded into the Spartacan movement, however, who were inexperienced in the ways of socialism and not imbued with Luxemburg's respect for the will of the masses and the *Massenstreik*, they outvoted their leaders in favour of an impatient, immediate uprising, which the Spartacan leaders knew in their hearts would be a mere unsuccessful *putsch*, a disaster. But being outvoted, they felt it their duty to put themselves at the head of the forlorn uprising. Therefore, they could not go to Moscow to oppose Lenin's attempt to form prematurely a Communist International. But Lenin knew in his heart that without the Germans, his International would be no true International but at bottom a Russian affair.

The Spartacan leaders selected the young man, Eberlein, and gave him an imperative mandate (a binding instruction) to oppose unswervingly Lenin's plan for the immediate founding of a new International. Jogiches told Paul Levi that a good reason for choosing the inexperienced Eberlein was that he was "known to be narrow-minded—indeed, obtuse—but stubborn and tenacious," which made Jogiches "feel sure that the people in Moscow would not succeed in swaying him."

When Eberlein left for Moscow, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht had just been assassinated while being taken to jail after the unsuccessful *putsch*. And Jogiches was caught and assassinated shortly after the congress closed. With the deaths of these leaders and the expulsion of Levi, forced by Lenin, the last chance of a German counterweight to the Bolshevik domination of the International was lost. Lenin tried many ways of pressurizing the young delegate and

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

putting him off his guard, then went so far as to promise that without the Germans the meeting would be called an "International Communist Conference" to adopt a rallying appeal to all parties and groups to form a new International. Lenin's chief aim was to prevent Eberlein from walking out if the International were formed before the Germans felt the time was ripe. By various forms of pressure and persuasion they got Eberlein to express what his mandate directed, but not to walk out. In the official document the German-speaking part of Austria-Hungary was absurdly substituted for Germany, since Eberlein would not change his mind nor violate his mandate. Hence the final document began:

> The representatives of the Communist Party of German Austria, the left wing Social Democratic Party of Sweden, the Balkan Social Democratic Revolutionary Federation of the Balkans [all the Balkan countries being represented by Christian Rakovsky, who was shortly to be named Prime Minister of the Ukraine], and the Communist Party of Hungary propose the foundation of the Communist International.

Lenin put the best face he could on the matter by declaring:

> For only a short time, naturally, hegemony within the revolutionary proletarian International has passed to the Russians, just as at different periods during the nineteenth century it belonged to the British, then to the French, and then to the Germans.

The "short time" of which Lenin spoke has lasted up till now!

UNCONSCIOUSLY Lenin had set the Russian seal upon the International from the outset: by the manner of selecting the so-called delegates, most of them members of his party and all but a handful residents in Russia or in its prisoner of war camps; by sending out the call for the conference as a public message from Chicherin, Minister or Commissar of Foreign Affairs; by Lenin's role in opening the first session of the congress and presiding over all the sessions, making all the important chess moves and playing the role of kibitzer to the minor ones; by having Trotsky write the *Manifesto* of the congress; by having Bukharin make the first rough draft of a *Programme*, while he (Lenin) wrote the resolution on "Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat"; by making the closing address; and by having his wartime lieutenant, Zinoviev, elected Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI). Lenin's closing address ended with the words: "The hour for the founding of an international Soviet Republic is near." And in a report to the leading comrades in Moscow that same evening he closed with the prophecy, "The comrades present in this room . . . will all see the establishment of a World Federative Republic of Soviets."

Lenin believed this was so, and proceeded to act accordingly. We

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have noted how 2,000,000 rubles were publicly voted for the spread of the world revolution, how from the two capitals of Russia couriers brought out crown jewels and other treasures for the purposes of the various "sections" of the World Communist Party. When governments recognized the Soviet government, members of the Russian diplomatic staff, even ministers and ambassadors, openly subsidized the parties in the lands to which they were accredited. Joffe, the first ambassador to Germany, did so until he was expelled, whereupon he boasted in the press of the huge sums he had given to the German Communist Party. And we have seen how the minister to Mexico, Pestkowski, as late as 1924, on his own initiative gave me funds to publish *El Libertador*.

When the World Revolution did not spread as Lenin had hoped and it became expedient to make distinctions between the government and the Party, secret emissaries and secret instructions were sent to each party or "section" from the "General Staff of the World Revolution." At first Lenin sent emissaries of various nationalities, always provided that they enjoyed his confidence. But increasingly the "General Staff" depended on Russians. John Reed wrote in the American journal, *The Liberator*: "By September 1918 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had on its payroll 68 agents in Austria-Hungary, and more than that in Germany, as well as others in France, Switzerland, and Italy." To the bewildered Angelica Balabanoff when she was in Stockholm, Lenin wrote: "Do not consider the cost. Spend millions, tens of millions if necessary. There is plenty of money at our disposal." Angelica did not know what to do with such sums, for she did not understand the uses of bribery, the purchase of supporters, nor the creation of movements and journals by foreign funds rather than by winning the support of working men and winning co-religionists by eloquence and persuasion.

As the Soviet government got diplomatic recognition from more and more governments, its leaders discovered yet another device—the use of diplomatic immunity as a cover for spies—whereupon they added to their couriers, their emissaries, and their Comintern representatives an ever greater number of "diplomatic" spies and secret agents. When Pestkowski came to Mexico in 1924, he brought with him only three men, a deputy minister, a journalist or public relations man, and a translator. That was more than enough for the genuine diplomatic business of the Soviet government in Mexico and would quite suffice today, too. But by the 1970s the number of Soviet "diplomats" in Mexico has increased to over 100! Of the 100 at least 96 are superfluous except for espionage in the 20 countries of Latin America. Every Soviet embassy today has a number of agents whose secret rank and business outrank those of the ambassadors, and the United Nations organization is similarly honeycombed, which does not prevent their sending yet other agents more secretively without benefit of diplo-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

matic immunity. Nor does it prevent their using appropriate recruits from the various communist parties, provided either that their membership has remained secret or that they can engage in some striking action which seems to prove that they are anti-communists. Thus, in one of the most sensational cases in this country, a man who was a secret Communist operating in a government agency made himself eligible for advancement in the government by "fingering" the other secret Communists in his department.[1]

IF the First Congress of the Comintern was a sham, the second and third were not. Lenin led them as he had the first, but as he began to perceive that his World Revolution had not spread beyond the borders of the old tsarist empire, and that his "World Party" had sustained defeats in Germany, in Hungary, and in Poland, his mania for splitting and splitting and splitting and for voluntaristic offensives gave way to a more healing gospel.

The sections or parties began to grow because of the persuasiveness of power and success, the war weariness of millions, and the sense of shame that the Socialist Parties in the various belligerent countries had succumbed to the war fever. In vain did Lenin strive to prevent the revival of the Second International and the Amsterdam Trade Union International, yet the Communist Parties grew as well, although they might have grown much faster were it not for the effects of his splitting tactics. In due course he realized that the majority of the socialist-minded and trade union-minded working men were not in his camp, whereupon he turned his mind to the question of how to reach them. He wrote a special programmatic and tactical pamphlet to guide his not inconsiderable following, often much against their will, back into the trade unions which he had been trying to destroy, and into various forms of "united front" with the big Socialist Parties which he had indicated as social-patriots, social-traitors, and agents of the bourgeoisie. The pamphlet, *Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Sickness*, became the gospel of the Comintern. The "leftism" which he now treated as an infantile disorder was the will to continue the tactics he himself had been preaching all through the Great War and the first period of post-war communism. Those who could not make the about-face with him he excoriated, then drove out of their parties.

Yet on the whole it was a healing gospel: in place of split, split, split—a united front; in place of ridiculing parliamentarism—taking more seriously parliamentary elections; in place of dual unionism—

[1] If the reader wishes to learn more about the founding of the Communist International and Lenin's role therein, the best book is *Lenin and the Comintern*, by Branko Lazitch and Milorad M. Drachkovitch (Stanford, 1972). So, too, for the characters that figure in this part of my story, the reader cannot find anything else to equal the *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern*, by the same authors (Stanford 1973). For a thorough study of the work of Soviet agents and spies in foreign countries the best book is John Barron's *KGB* (paperback and cloth, New York, 1974).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a return to the old mass unions or their "infiltration." He had to fight a serious struggle with the British Communists when he demanded that they return to the British Labour Party. And he faced another difficult struggle in his own Party when he asked it to recognize the failure of his policy of universal socialization, of the reckless debasing of the currency, and of the prohibition of all trade as "criminal speculation." He proposed instead the New Economic Policy or NEP, under which the Russian economy began to recover.

At the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in November, 1922 Lenin, not feeling well enough to participate actively, asked Leon Trotsky to make the main report in his place. Trotsky's report was entitled, "On the New Soviet Economic Policy and the Perspectives of the Soviet Revolution." At the Fifth Congress, Trotsky was ill. He was not allowed even to put in an appearance, nor was he sent any message of greeting, nor was any asked of him.

AFTER three years of lively activity in the American Communist Party, I was chosen as one of its delegates to the Sixth Congress, which met in Moscow from 11 July to 1 September, 1928. It was on the whole the most important congress since the second. It was notable for the numbers attending, 558 delegates from 58 parties; for the able theoretical leadership of all its most important matters by Nikolai Bukharin; and for the adoption at last of *The Programme of the Communist International*, which the participants estimated to be the most important document since the *Communist Manifesto*. It was even held to be an improvement on that classic work of prophecy, in that the new *Programme* dealt with an international party that actually held power, was "building socialism" on one-sixth of the earth, and had "sections" in more than 50 other countries through which it hoped to extend its revolution and its power to all the countries of the world.

I went to the Sixth Congress not by working my passage, but as a second-class passenger on a Cunard line ship with all expenses paid by the Communist International. I duly applied for a passport under my own name, paid my $10 fee, then received $9 back (they charged a dollar for saying *No*!) together with a letter saying,

> Acting under the authority given to me by act of Congress, I have decided not to grant you a passport.
>
> Faithfully yours,
> (Signed) Frank B. Kellogg
> Secretary of State.

I was prepared for the possibility of such a reply, though I had not expected the irony of the "Faithfully yours," nor the $1 charge for the "service." Since I believed, and continue to believe, in the right of people to enter and leave their native lands freely, I had a

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

friend in Canada get me a Canadian passport under the name of Albert Ward. In my application for an American passport I had given the name of the ship on which I intended to leave and the date of my sailing. Unhesitatingly I took the same ship on the same date indicated, and sailed to Portsmouth, thence to Le Havre, and then went by train to Paris, Berlin, and Moscow, keeping an account of my expenditures which were recompensed by the Comintern. It was a smooth trip with no adventures worthy of note, except for two problems that unexpectedly faced me on the British steamer.

The first came before the giant ship left the harbour of New York. I was pacing the deck with an engineer from the north of England, who was slightly drunk from a farewell party. A man passed us as the first call came up, " All ashore that's going ashore."

" Why, hallo, Comrade Wolfe," he cried. " Where are you going?"

I paused for an imperceptible second, then said, " My name isn't Conrad, and I don't believe I know you."

" Why, don't you come from New York?"

" I'm from Montreal."

Just then came the second cry of " All ashore," and my puzzled questioners left me. My tipsy companion said nothing. He never referred to the episode in the five or six days of the trip, but when he was leaving at Portsmouth, he was drunk once more, and the liquor seemed to revive his memory of our first walk on the deck. " There'sh somthin' funny about you," he said." I heard what that fellow said to you. Anyhow, good-bye and good luck," and he lurched toward the gangplank.

The second episode was also due to the way in which ships throw their passengers together. Someone asked me, " By the way, what's the name of that lovely park in Montreal?" I know now that it is Mount Royal, but I had never been in Montreal at that time, so I fended that one off by answering, " Oh, we natives just call it The Park," and I changed the subject.

The moral, if there is a moral to the verse that begins " Oh, what a tangled web we weave . . . " is not to go by steamship but by air, but in 1928 Lindbergh's famous solo flight across the Atlantic to Le Bourget airfield was only one year behind us, and there was no means for any but a Lindbergh to cross the ocean by plane. Incidentally, sometime in late May or early June of 1927 I had written a signed article in the *Daily Worker* praising Lindbergh for his heroic deed, and had spoken of the adventurous spirit of American youth. The ever watchful Bittelman had immediately attacked me in the Politburo and had sent a cable to Moscow about my " American chauvinism," but that seems to have been one complaint that Stalin did not find worthy of putting in my dossier. If he had, I think I would have known how to defend myself.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ON the surface, the sixth congress of the Communist International seemed to run like an engineer's dream of a frictionless machine. There were 58 parties represented; if not every one of the 558 delegates spoke, at least every one of the 58 parties had its say. If there were differences in these parties, every faction had its spokesman. The Congress had 46 sessions, and the stenographic account appeared in Russian and German in six hefty volumes. The programme we adopted and the resolutions that were passed took up an entire volume by themselves.

Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin delivered the opening address, the *Report on the International Situation*, and the opening and closing addresses on the *Programme* which he had been engaged in writing since the First Congress of the Comintern, sat on the platform during all 46 sessions, only occasionally asking a co-chairman to take the chair, kept a pad and pencil busy, apparently taking copious notes on what every speaker said, delivered the closing address, and was unanimously elected chairman of the incoming executive committee of the Comintern. He was a brilliant, eloquent, gay, and humorous speaker and a subtle master of the Russian tongue. He could speak German, French, and English as occasion required. His addresses were delivered in German, the *lingua franca* of the Comintern. His leadership of the debates gave them an intellectual and theoretical quality that made it a pleasure to listen when he took the floor.

When I asked for and got the floor at the 36th session to discuss the problems of industrialization of the colonial lands by their respective "mother countries" and the state of affairs in Latin America, I took advantage of my nearness to Bukharin's place at the presidium table to see what kind of notes he was taking on my speech. I discovered that his notebook had not a word in it, only a series of skilful caricature portraits of each of the speakers. He had been an artist in his youth before he met Lenin and became an active Leninist. A glance told me that his drawing of me was much better than the one a professional artist had done of me at the Fifth Congress, which the Russians had then printed as a picture postcard.

There were, however, a few things that bothered me in Bukharin's report on the international situation. One of them was the insistence that a new world war was imminent. Of course, in our century of heavily armed nations, war could break out at any moment and could swell into a world war. But I knew that my country was not preparing for immediate war, and that England and France were still weary and weakened by the First World War which had ended with the impossible Versailles treaty. They suffered, too, from a shortage of recruitable young men. They had lost an entire generation in the four years of wholesale slaughter. When my friend, Walter Pach, an art critic, went to Paris after World War I and asked what was doing in the field of painting, Picasso, Leger, Matisse, and other pre-war

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

painters told him what *they* were doing. But when Pach asked, *Et les jeunes*? they answered, *Nous sommes les jeunes.* Most of the young men who might have become the great painters of the next generation had been killed on the fields of battle defending France against the German invasion. Only older men remained to carry on the arts. How could France then dream of starting another world war before a new generation had reached manhood?

The Comintern, however, informed us that there was danger of an immediate outbreak of war. Russia would be invaded by the combined capitalist powers and their satellites. The signs? The collapse of the British General Strike of 1926; the breaking off of Britain's diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union; the raid on *Arcos*; the break of the British trade unions with the pseudo-trade unions of Russia; Chiang Kai-shek's break with the Chinese communists that were infiltrating the Kuomintang and the expulsion of Borodin for interfering in Chinese internal affairs. But did these disparate phenomena amount to an imminent danger of war?

Dutifully, in 1926, 1927, and 1928 we tried to find an immediate danger of a new world war, with America, which had emerged from World War I as the great creditor nation and the strongest world power, as the leader of a new war. Was it to be a war against England and Japan for control of the world, or a war against the Soviet Union in which all capitalist powers united? Not seeing striking signs of either, we said both. In 1928 Lovestone wrote a 20 page pamphlet called *America Prepares the Next War.* And in *The Communist*, of which I was now the editor, I returned to my old theme of the horrors of total war. I got an able chemist (whose name does not matter here) to write a series on poison gases and chemical warfare. But suddenly my chemist disappeared from the scene of public life. Apparently, the Soviet secret police (the GPU) had taken an interest in such a specialist, perhaps with the favourable recommendation of the Central Committee or its executive secretary, and he disappeared from my view. I did not hear from him again until some time during World War II when he had broken with his secret employers, and, finding the journal *Foreign Affairs* during the Grand Alliance too full of illusions concerning Stalin as our glorious ally, he tried to persuade me to write for that journal and " cure " its editor of his Grand Alliance illusions.

When I returned from the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, I wrote in a report: ". . . the whole work of the Sixth Congress on every question leads to the same conclusion—that the war danger is the decisive factor in the present situation. The keynote of the message of the Congress to the various sections of the Comintern may be summed up as follows: *We are in a war period. Prepare the Parties for war.*"

Did I believe this? It still seemed improbable to me that such a war

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would break out in the 1920s. Not until 1939, when Stalin and Hitler signed a pact for the division of the world, did a general world war begin. And then the issues and the protagonists were quite different. Why then did I silence my doubts on the presence of a war situation at the end of the 1920s? It is a question that it is hard for me to answer. While in Moscow I tried to get hold of Bukharin to argue with him and question him on this matter, but as factotum of the Congress, he never had a spare moment, so I returned to America with my doubts, although I stilled them, because taking the line of the Communist International as gospel was becoming a habit with me as with everybody else in our party.

Coupled with this fixation on the imminent war danger was a declaration that in all parties everywhere in the world "the Right Danger has become the main danger." Why? Why in all parties everywhere in the world? Was not each party in a different stage of development? Did they not have different components and differing histories?

Added to that was the categorical declaration that all parties were now entering into a "Third Period." Why the periodization? And why for all parties? Had not some of these 58 parties barely been formed shortly before the Sixth Congress? Were they, too, already in their "Third Period"? I was answered that the Comintern was a single world party dealing with a single world situation, and that all its parties, new or old, were but sections of this one world party dealing with a single world situation.

I examined Bukharin's report, *The World Situation*, which said:

> The third period is the period in which the economy of capitalism and at the same time the economy of the Soviet Union surpass the pre-war level. . . . This third period, in which the antagonisms between the growth of productive forces and the restriction of markets have greatly intensified, inevitably leads to a fresh epoch of wars among the imperialist states, of wars against imperialism . . . of gigantic class struggles.

I was back to the imminent war danger, plus a new element: "gigantic class struggles."

Since I could not get 10 minutes alone with Bukharin, I tried another member of the Russian delegation, Dmitri Manuilski. Our discussion was short and sharp. It ended something like this:

"Comrade Manuilski, do you not see that the world consists of an infinite variety of countries in enormously different stages of development, with different social structures and different concerns?"

"No, we see one world. We are a world party, every section of which faces the same world situation. The little powers will be dragged in the wake of the great powers, as they were in the last world war. Maybe you think America is an exception to our analysis? I think America is now in its 1905, and will soon be in its 1917."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I looked at him in amazement. The America of Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge in its 1905! In the 1930s America was to go through the greatest depression in its history without a 1905 or a 1917 occurring. It might do Manuilski some good to live in America for a while before he dogmatized so simply. I could get nothing from him and I felt I could give nothing to him. That ended our discussion.

TO all appearances, the great congress going on in the Great Hall of the Columns proceeded with complete unanimity. In little rooms and cubicles around the Great Hall, where the resolutions on the work of the separate parties were discussed, there might be differences, often sharp differences, but sooner or later what the Russian delegation wanted to be adopted there was also adopted unanimously—or if not the days of the few who resisted in the ranks of the Comintern were numbered.

Bukharin, as we have seen, delivered all the reports in the Great Hall, and all of his reports were adopted unanimously. At the final 46th session of the congress he was unanimously elected chairman of the incoming executive committee of the Communist International. The hall rang with cheers for him; the delegates rose to their feet and sang *The International* in his honour in their various languages.

But on every side of the Great Hall, as in any well-built theatre or opera house, there were exits leading to corridors which surrounded the meeting place. And in these corridors there were a number of young men from the Russian Communist Party led by the Georgian, Vissarion (or Besso) Lominadze, and his inseparable associate, Lazar Abramovich Shatskin, two leaders of the Russian Communist youth movement. They hardly troubled to attend the congress itself or to listen to Bukharin's addresses and reports, but seemed to spend all their time in the corridors, buttonholing delegates as they went out into the corridors for a rest or a smoke, and retailing gossip against Bukharin. "Yes, his report on the world situation is all right now, but only after the Politburo amended it and eliminated its errors." They said the same of his *Programme* and his report thereon, and of every other address or report he delivered. "We corrected him . . . we put in or sharpened the formulation of the idea of the Third Period and the idea that the Right Danger was the main danger in every party." When a delegate would ask who "we" were, he learned that "we" were the Stalinists, or Joseph Stalin himself, or one of his close adherents and spokesmen.

Why, then, was Bukharin reporting on everything? Why was he getting such stormy applause? Why was he unanimously elected chairman of the ECCI? Why was Stalin so silent at the congress? Why did there appear to be two "congresses,"—one in the Great Hall luxuriating in its enthusiasm and unanimity, and another going on in the corridors, full of gossip, carping criticism, and hints of Bukharin's

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unworthiness to lead the Communist International? Was it because Joseph Stalin was still virtually unknown in the Communist International and Bukharin the most popular figure in all the parties, except where some faction remembered Trotsky's role in the conquest of power in November 1917, and in directing the Red Army in the years of the Civil War? Was a fight brewing in the Russian Communist Party? If so, why were their differences not ventilated in the congress itself or in one of its subcommittees? After all, the world congress was the supreme body of the Communist International, and it was settling all the problems and differences within each of its subordinate sections or parties. What else but a world congress such as this with its 58 parties represented would have the authority to settle differences in the most important of its parties? Would all our parties not feel the blow if a fight should break out in the Russian Communist Party?

We of the American delegation held a meeting with the German delegation to discuss this question. We instructed our spokesmen in the most confidential and most important of the subcommittees of the congress, the *Seniorenkonvent*, or council of the elders, to ask point blank whether there was a fight brewing in the Russian Communist Party. And if so, why should not all the parties of the Comintern help to settle it, since it concerned all of them and since they were now present in a world congress, the supreme body of the International?

It was our delegate to the *Seniorenkonvent*, Jay Lovestone, who asked the question: "Is there a fight brewing in the Russian Communist Party? If so, isn't a world congress with a special Russian subcommission the place to settle it?"

Stalin took it upon himself to answer. "There are no differences in the leadership of the Russian Party," he said gruffly. "All the reports of Comrade Bukharin to the congress were considered by our central committee and approved unanimously." The answer seemed simple and reassuring, yet it left unsolved the mystery of the "corridor congress." And, though we did not fully realize it when Lovestone reported to us, Stalin had several reasons for being furious. He was getting ready to fight Bukharin as soon as the congress safely adjourned. But take it up at the Sixth Congress? Never! For he had as yet no standing in the Communist International; he had never delivered a report to a congress, nor played a leading role in any of them. He knew how to wait. He was waiting now for the delegates from the 58 parties to return to their homelands. When the congress which cheered Bukharin until the rafters rang was safely adjourned, then would be the time to begin his attack, first on Bukharin's followers and then on the leaders of all the parties that showed admiration for the one whom the dying Lenin had called the "darling of the Party." Yet here was Lovestone, and Ewart for the German Delegation, asking that a Russian commission be set up by the congress to settle differences in the Russian Party. And who were all these nobodies that filled the hall of the Sixth Congress? It

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was all right for the Russians to judge all the other parties and their problems, but what gave the other parties the impudence to believe that they could judge the Russians? Stalin would never forgive Lovestone's attempt to call the Russian Party to account for its internal affairs before the Congress.

And Joseph Stalin had yet another special reason for harbouring suspicions concerning Lovestone. When the budget commission of the *Seniorenkonvent* met to consider the requests of the American Communist Party for funds, Lovestone said:

> For our campaigns on issues that spring from American life, we ask no assistance. If our issues are properly chosen, we should be able to raise money to support our campaigns from the masses to whom we are appealing. But whenever the American Party is asked to carry on some campaign by the Comintern on some international issue affecting all lands, then we may make a request for funds to cover the costs of such a campaign.

This dignified statement, one would think, would arouse enthusiasm in the Russian Party, for the American Party was offering to finance the campaigns that rose directly out of the issues of American life, the campaign for funds being part of the campaign on the issues. Yet Stalin's insight told him that this was a "Declaration of Independence" on the part of the American Party. Only worldwide campaigns ordered by the Comintern on issues which might touch one country more than another might require some financial aid from the Comintern, i.e. from the Russian Party which extracted the funds from the Russian people. But Stalin wanted the parties to be dependent as completely as possible on the Russian Party and thus more subservient to it.

Perhaps the difference might be illustrated by a story just then current in our movement. The First World War had swallowed up all efforts and all materials, so that new homes were not built and there was a shortage of living space. There followed a period of prosperity and high interest rates; rents for apartments skyrocketed. Our Party formed tenants' leagues, called rent strikes, set up picket lines to prevent the ousting of tenants and the dumping of their household goods on the streets for failure to pay the rent on time.

As the story goes, the picket line of one of the apartment houses chose to carry signs concerning both rents and the worldwide campaign ordered by the Comintern under the slogan "Hands Off China." Whereupon the landlord approached a woman tenant leading the line with a placard reading "HANDS OFF CHINA!" "Sarah," said the landlord, "I have a bargain to make with you. I'll keep my hands off China: you keep your hands off my apartment house."

The "Hands Off China" campaign seemed a proper one on a world scale at the moment, but America's attitude towards China, still conditioned by the "open door" policy, was quite different from that

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the powers that had seized extra-territorial treaty ports and seemed to be trying to extend their areas of extra-territorial control. The rent issue was close to the feelings of the tenant pickets, while "Hands Off China" seemed remote to tenants striking in the Bronx. For the rent issue Lovestone believed he could raise funds from those who suffered from high rents. For "Hands Off China" we would conduct a campaign, too, but might ask for help with funds if the campaign proved costly and collections meagre. Lovestone's offer seemed the reverse of the landlord's offer, but Stalin rightly recognized in Lovestone's distinction a "declaration of independence" and yet other heresies.

And heresies were easy to find when one was looking for them and had the authority to declare what was orthodoxy and what was heresy. Thus from 1925 to 1928 it was official doctrine in the Comintern that "American capitalism is still healthy," though it might be good insurance policy to add "but not for long." The words, "still healthy," were first used by Eugene Varga, a Hungarian who had been people's commissar for finance and chairman of the supreme economic council of the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919, and then, fleeing to Russia, had become the official oracle of the Communist International on the state of the economy of the world. Having pronounced American capitalism *still healthy* in 1925, in 1926 he enlarged his formula by adding, "as opposed to European capitalism . . . it is certainly *on the upgrade*." The American commissions set up by the Comintern at various times played variations on this theme, such as "American finance capitalism is now more powerful than ever . . . but will get ever more deeply entangled in the contradictions and crises of European capitalism." Absurdly enough, the reverse of this "but" clause proved to be true in the 1930s, when it was the European economy that got ever more entangled in the great crisis which started on the American farms in 1926, spread to the cities, industry, and the stock market in 1929, and then to Europe.

When Bukharin succeeded Zinoviev as the leader of the Comintern, he broadened the formula to read "the United States, to some extent Japan, and some British dominions are still countries of upward capitalist development." Later he added that "American capitalism is the stronghold of the entire capitalist system, the most powerful capitalism in the world."

Thus, Jay Lovestone seemed to be saying nothing unusual when he declared in July 1928, "We have an economic depression . . . but American national economy as such is not declining fundamentally." However, by the end of 1927 Stalin, having safely disposed of Zinoviev and Trotsky with Bukharin's aid, decided to turn on Bukharin and rule the world alone. Lovestone had already embarrassed him by asking whether such a fight was brewing, while the parties of the Comintern were assembled in congress. And Lovestone, Stalin reckoned, was the leader of an American faction to which the Comintern under

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bukharin's leadership, had given full support. The Comintern had found Lovestone's faction " more loyal " to it and " closer to its views." What was needed now was an issue to prove that the majority leadership of the American Party was *less loyal* and *infinitely distant from the Comintern's views.* Stalin decided that Lovestone was an American Exceptionalist, a believer that America was an exception to the newly proclaimed dogma of the Third Period, the period of fierce and decisive class battles and the universal decay of capitalism.

At the 15th Congress of the Russian Party, which prepared the Party's stand for the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, Stalin decided that the period of " partial and temporary stabilization of capitalism " had come to an end, that capitalism was in a new state of " collapsing stabilization " and was on " the eve of a new revolutionary upsurge." This was the *Third Period* that Bukharin, under Stalin's pressure, had announced in his report on the world situation.

According to Stalin, this new period of " revolutionary upsurge " applied to America just as well as to Europe. His proof? The American and worldwide Sacco-Vanzetti demonstrations! But Bukharin, in his report, still fenced with Stalin's new analysis. Yes, he said, we are " at the beginning of a new period . . . a period of active struggle. . . . But I do not wish to say that we are now on the eve of an immediate revolutionary situation in Europe." Still less, he cautioned, was there a revolutionary situation in the United States. Yet that is just what Stalin was trying to force upon him with the formula of a new " Third Period." And Manuilsky, a spokesman for Stalin, pointed up the disagreement in the Russian delegation by warning us that we should not " draw pessimistic conclusions concerning the prospects of the American Communist and labour movements." Those prospects were for " the revolutionization of America " in the near future. That is what he had meant by telling me, as he later did Lovestone in the American Commission, that America had reached its " period of 1905."

There we sat in the Sixth Congress like dummies, for Bukharin did not—nor did he dare—tell us of the losing battle he was fighting in the Russian Stalin-packed Politburo and Central Committee. Only the gossip going on in the corridors outside the main hall, only the " corridor congress " as it came to be called, gave us warning that all might not be well. But when Lovestone had asked point blank in the *Seniorenkonvent*, " Is there a fight brewing in the Russian Party?" —Bukharin had said nothing. And Stalin had said, " No, there are no differences in the leadership of the Russian Communist Party." So we left for America satisfied, for the new oracle had spoken with Delphic clarity, and indeed we could take heart when we saw that Bukharin was *unanimously* elected chairman of the incoming executive committee of the Comintern, all the Russians voting for him like the rest of us, and joining in the final demonstration in his honour. How

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could we know that a week before the congress opened, Bukharin in despair secretly visited Kamenev and told him with trembling lips that Stalin "is an unprincipled intriguer who subordinates everything to the preservation of his power. In order to get rid of someone, at any given moment he will change his theories. . . . He has spoiled the Programme for me in many places. . . . He will slay me with chess moves."

Stalin was not quite ready for the kill, and he knew that he could not stake his exiguous world reputation against Bukharin's at the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International. But as soon as the delegates from all the 58 parties represented there had left for their homes, Stalin opened fire on Bukharin. Even then the battle was waged for some time behind the scenes. It took us several months to realize that there was something wrong in Moscow.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Trotsky's Trotskyism

Robert H. McNeal

ANY militant Marxist revolutionary shopping for a movement today faces a discouraging display case. Stalinism stands badly discredited, as both bourgeois and oppressive. Maoism has suffered from the succession struggle in China and the emergence of a regime which qualifies both Mao's infallibility and its own anti-imperialist credentials. "Reform Communism" in Eastern Europe has been pretty well crushed, and its relative, Eurocommunism, bears the dual burden of a Stalinist past and a "me-tooist" social democratic present. Kim Il Sungism, Hoxhaism or Pol Potism are too exotic for all but a very few—which leaves Trotskyism.

This movement offers the image of a great revolutionary hero, a one-time winner whose later career can be conveniently dissociated from the disappointments of Marxism in power. There has never been a specifically Trotskyist government with the embarrassing task of actually building a communist society; the Trotskyist parties have remained sufficiently small and isolated from serious parliamentary activity and, therefore, relatively untainted by responsibility. (The unusual case of the Trotskyist Party in Sri Lanka proves this rule, but not as an exception. Once it had achieved a substantial parliamentary role and entered a coalition cabinet, it was expelled from the Fourth International.) Trotskyism is the only visible branch of militant revolutionary Marxism that can make any pretence of having an International, the embodiment of one of Marx's main ethical attractions. Trotskyism even offers some attempt at a theoretical explanation of why communism has fared badly after the proletarian revolution, first in Russia, then elsewhere, and this explanation, however inadequate, does have more appeal for the Marxist than the mutual recriminations of Moscow and Peking, in which both sides seem baffled by the theoretical problem of a supposedly authentic proletarian revolution retrogressing to something akin to fascism.

Thus a case emerges for the continued vitality of Trotskyism, not as a mass movement, as it is little more than a collection of rival sects, but as a significant force among the intellectual *enragés*. The personal legacy of Trotsky to the movement bearing his name, however, is not wholly advantageous. The large body of his own writings is often readable and challenging, but in some ways either irrelevant or embarrassing to the concerns of western radicals. Baruch Knei-Paz's long, erudite study of Trotsky's ideas points to some of these problems, although it avoids commentary on the writings of Trotsky's followers.*

* Baruch Knei-Paz, *The Social and Political Thought of Leon Trotsky* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Knei-Paz's main thesis is that Trotsky is the principal adapter of Marxism to the situation of a "backward" country. This theme dominates all but the final quarter of the book, which consists of an interesting but somewhat miscellaneous survey of Trotsky's ideas on such matters as art, history, science and the Jews. In the main body of the book, he explains with a wealth of detail how the theories of "permanent revolution" and "combined development" were evolved after the revolution of 1905 as an indication of how pre-capitalist Russia could lead the West in starting the proletarian revolution, and continued in the 1920s as an explanation of the persisting necessity of revolution in advanced countries.

The main point of Trotskyism seems therefore marginal to the present concerns of most Trotskyists, who are found mainly in the most economically developed countries. Indeed, when Trotsky was attempting to lead a movement based on these countries in the 1930s, he stressed the importance of a revolution of the classical Marxist type rather than the "permanent" variety. One might argue that his main theoretical insight did not apply to the situation in developed countries and that this led him into the embarrassing error of proclaiming in July 1936 that the new French revolution had begun. Knei-Paz does not deal with Trotsky's wishful thinking on this matter, presumably because the subject falls into the category of current commentary rather than theory. But this distinction is hard to maintain, and the idea that a French revolution in the 1930s would rescue the European (and Soviet) proletariat is too central to Trotsky's thought to be omitted from a work such as Knei-Paz's. Clearly such a revolution was consistent with the general concept of permanent revolution. It was the predicted proletarian victory in the West which would enable backward Russia to build a socialist society. Unfortunately, it did not happen, and Trotsky's ideas cast little light on the reasons why. Therefore his followers today find little of real help in his writings on the West, which interests most of them far more than permanent revolution in the Third World. This point is illustrated by the conduct of some fairly widely known Trotskyist militants of Third World origin, such as Tariq Ali or Daniel Bensaïd. They have settled in the West and espoused the cause of revolution in Britain and France, countries which do not stand in need of a theory of permanent revolution. It is small wonder that the writings of the younger generation of Trotskyists do not seem greatly concerned with the teachings of the Old Man, a subject for some discreet grumbling on the part of their elders in the movement.

In particular, contemporary Trotskyist literature has not engaged in any serious analysis of the Stalin-Trotsky debate on socialism in one country. The question has been left to non-sectarian scholars and is far from settled. For years, the tendency in Western writing was to accept at face value the claim that there was a vast difference between

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stalin's and Trotsky's positions. Certainly, there was some inclination to consider the doctrine of permanent revolution as one of unqualified and unreasoning *putschism.* Knei-Paz has no patience for such distortions and rightly places the debate of the 1920s in the context of alternative strategies that tried to start with the actual absence of the world revolution. He maintains that first Stalin and then Trotsky exaggerated the contrast between their views, but he does not go as far as Richard Day in belittling the difference.† Although Day's monograph is dated five years before Knei-Paz's, it is a tribute to the stately pace of scholarly communication that Knei-Paz was unable, he writes, to refer to Day's work in preparing his own.

Day maintains that the theory of permanent revolution was only tangential to the debate on socialism in one country and that Trotsky did not doubt that socialism could be built in one country. He finds much to support this thesis in a detailed study of the evolution of Trotsky's economic policies. Knei-Paz, on the other hand, deals mainly with a more abstract level of thought, and concludes that socialism in one country was incompatible with Trotsky's consistent stress on the universality of the revolution and its need for western assistance. Is the contradiction between the two scholars or within Trotsky? I incline toward the latter view, and would suggest that despite his conscientious efforts to note Trotsky's inconsistencies, Knei-Paz has to some extent improved on Trotsky when it comes to presenting a coherent world view. Trotsky may indeed be quoted as standing firmly against socialism in one country, but he also wrote in 1930–31 that "Successful socialist construction is proceeding in the USSR"; and "Academically, it is understood, one can construct within the boundaries of the USSR an enclosed and internally balanced socialist economy . . ." He denied, however, that this would be the ultimate society. But then, so did Stalin, who posited the disappearance of the capitalist threat ("world revolution") for the achievement of this stage. The main difference here, it seems to me, is that Stalin used words to serve his interests, while Trotsky sometimes was the prisoner of abstract nouns. Stalin blithely proclaimed in the mid-1930s that the USSR had built socialism, but then revealed that the ultimate society was not called "socialism" at all, it was called "communism" and lay in the remote future. Trotsky, however, had undermined his political appeal in defence of the word "socialism," assuming that it meant the ultimate society. It was a sacred word, and it did not occur to Trotsky to challenge Stalin on its meaning. Knei-Paz persuasively emphasizes Trotsky's espousal of the general over the particular. This enabled him to invent some interesting intellectual models, but blinded him to the possibility that such abstractions as "socialism" might be not the higher reality

† Richard B. Day, *Leon Trotsky and the Politics of Economic Isolation* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1973).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but merely words, invented by men and susceptible to manipulation by men.

WHATEVER differences of emphasis one may place on such matters of interpretation, it remains true that Knei-Paz has provided a summary and analysis of Trotsky's thought that is not likely to be superseded. It stands as a valuable corrective to the presentation by the late Isaac Deutscher of the "prophet's" ideas, although Knei-Paz on the whole refrains from conducting a running commentary on that imposing but partisan biographical trilogy. Knei-Paz is particularly interesting on the concept of the party. Unlike Trotsky in his autobiographical writings, Deutscher does discuss Trotsky's scathing critique of Lenin after the Second Party Congress. Deutscher makes Trotsky's comments on "substitutionism" (the party for the proletariat, the apparatus for the party, the dictator for the apparatus) the basis for the prophetic theme of his trilogy. But for Deutscher, the fulfilment of the prophecy came with Stalin, and Trotsky's reconciliation with Lenin in 1917 by no means indicated an acceptance of substitutionism. Knei-Paz, on the other hand, sees Trotsky as coming to accept the principle of substitutionism as a necessary missing link in the theory of permanent revolution. In 1917, he argues, Trotsky became alarmed that the Russian proletariat would settle for less, politically, than it could take. He had been too optimistic concerning the spontaneous inclinations of the proletariat, and it was necessary for an authoritative party to step in on its behalf in order to force the revolution in a backward and incompletely prepared country. Knei-Paz rightly sees the pre-1917 Trotsky as a man committed to the idea of a mass party, or even to a Soviet movement rather than party, and notes that Deutscher quoted rather selectively from *Our Political Tasks*, thus minimizing the seriousness of Trotsky's difference with Lenin on this matter. For Knei-Paz, then, Trotsky's factional shift in 1917 represented a serious repudiation of his previous concept of the party, but a necessary step for his concept of permanent revolution. His prophecy applied to Lenin's regime, and to Trotsky himself, as one of the most authoritarian of the deputies who substituted themselves for the proletariat.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ambiguities of Trotsky's Leninism*

Anthony D'Agostino

FEW historians have found it possible to write about Leon Trotsky without being impressed, not to say overpowered, by his heroic proportions as the archetypal intellectual in politics. E. H. Carr has spoken for a wide, and understandable, consensus in admiring his "sheer force of intellect" and "penetrating political acumen." Even the demands of political power, while in Carr's view showing his defects in practical matters, nevertheless cause "no falling off in intellectual power." The "no war, no peace" formula at the time of the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations is a "brilliant and ingenious improvisation"; he advocates NEP a year prior to its acceptance in the Party; he anticipates later measures of industrialization, planning, and the "statization" of the trade unions. He demonstrates an "unfaltering, at times almost uncanny, perception" of the historical problems of his time and the policies they demand.[1] His defects are those noted by Lenin in the latter's "Testament," flowing from "too enterprising a self-assurance and excessive enthusiasm for the purely administrative side of things." He lacks patience, offends with his arrogance, fails to use tact with political colleagues, is too intolerant and too individualistic. A classical Marxist—more so than Lenin, according to observers like Lunacharsky—he fails not in the realm of thought, but where thought translates into practical politics.

So impressive have these mental qualities seemed that little effort has been made to examine the architecture of Trotsky's thought. Current debates attending the emergence of Eurocommunism promise to keep alive controversy on Trotsky's role in history. Close examination of his ideas must also reveal, around the now familiar picture of the Trotsky whose historical achievements have been wrought by others in a distorted form, not a few blurred edges. A Russian Marxist who held all his life that the decisive revolutionary chapter would be written in the West, he never reconciled himself to the historical pattern of the Western socialist movement, nor delineated the precise meaning of what Lenin called the "International Significance of the Russian Revolution." His conversion to Bolshevism caused him to suppress his own past and, in great measure, to initiate that process of ideological self-abnegation which was to help Lenin's successors to destroy him politically. The Bolshevik Trotsky waged a serious struggle against "Trotskyism": he disavowed his pre-1917 "centrism," buried his

* The author is grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Frederick Burk Foundation for supporting research on which the following is based.

[1] E. H. Carr, *Socialism in One Country 1924–1926*, Vol. 1 (Baltimore, 1970), p. 161.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

famous premonitions (voiced in *Our Political Tasks* of 1904) about the dangers of Lenin's Russian Jacobinism, and sought to strengthen his more faintly expressed early misgivings about the Kautsky leadership of the German Social Democrats. After his defeat by Stalin, the exiled Trotsky failed to reassemble the fragments of his Trotskyism as a political legacy for his followers and sympathizers. He had to contend not only with Stalinist slander but with his own contradictions. The prophet of the Permanent Revolution had discarded the idea as an historical curiosity. The theorist of the Soviet Thermidor had denounced the idea when his fellow oppositionist V. M. Smirnov raised it in 1926—and broke with all who refused to abandon it. Organizer of the Red Army and Carnot of the Russian Revolution, he failed finally to understand the nature of modern warfare and its implications for the Leninist idea of defeatism. Classical Marxist and careful observer of the world of nations, he came to unorthodox conclusions about the progressive character of the power of the United States.

Part of the problem of understanding Trotsky's thought is traceable to the thesis of his biographer, Isaac Deutscher, that "Stalin's victory over Trotsky concealed a heavy element of defeat while Trotsky's defeat was pregnant with victory." [2] In this prism Stalin becomes the unwitting executor of the Trotsky programme of Soviet industrialization in an unforeseen and ironic way, actually in the same way that the terror and dictatorship of Robespierre and Bonaparte advanced the cause of the French Revolution. It is thus possible to present a defence of Stalinism which, while unacceptable to Stalinists, nevertheless justifies their course and confirms entirely their low opinions of the role and traditions of Western socialism and democracy. Light no longer comes from the West but from the ponderous evolution of a democratic Soviet Union, as predicted in the 1930s by the Austrian Marxist Otto Bauer.[3] Deutscher's posthumous Stalinization of Trotskyism proceeded from Trotsky's own feeling that he had "fructified developments" in his struggle against Stalin for Soviet industrialization. And the Deutscher version of a Trotskyism which could have a legitimate role only as a kind of loyal opposition within the official communist movement has always had a certain impact among Trotsky's sympathizers and followers.

However, while the conventional picture, accepted by both Deutscher and the Trotskyists, has depicted Trotsky's genuine Leninism being defeated by the rise of Stalin and the notion of Socialism in One Country, the fact is that Trotsky's crucial defeats were suffered at the hands of the Soviet party's veteran Leninists—"Old Bolsheviks"—before Stalin had emerged with his own theory. The heart of the problem of Trotsky and Trotskyism lies not in any alleged precocious "Stalinism" but in Trotsky's own professed Leninism.

[2] Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast—Trotsky: 1929–1940* (London, 1963), p. 515.

[3] Max Shachtman, "Personal and Political Dimensions," *Dissent*, Winter 1964, pp. 256–363. Joseph Buttinger, *In the Twilight of Socialism* (New York, 1953), pp. 502–504.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE very terms of Trotsky's conversion to Bolshevism were such as to impose upon him a severe handicap in his future struggle for Lenin's mantle. "Trotskyism" prior to 1917 meant to Russian Social Democrats the suggestion that a socialist state must issue from a future revolutionary development, if the latter's democratic gains were not to be lost. Trotsky had the satisfaction, in the spring of that year, of hearing his opponent, Lenin, accused in the Bolshevik Party of "Trotskyism." "I had to agree," Trotsky later wrote, "that Lenin had not come over to my point of view, but had developed his own, and that the course of events, by substituting arithmetic for algebra, had revealed the essential identity of our views." [4] It was Lenin's formula of a Revolutionary Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry that Trotsky had previously derided as "algebraic." He had reason to feel vindicated, and yet coming into a strange party, he felt compelled to minimize his foresight. He could cite Lenin's April criticism of the outworn notions of "Old Bolshevism" among which were the Democratic Dictatorship, but Trotsky never pressed Lenin to vindicate "Trotskyism." Instead, he came to value most Lenin's judgment that, since leaving Menshevism behind, there had been "no better Bolshevik" than Trotsky. "It had not been the theory of Permanent Revolution that had separated us," he was to write, "but the narrower, though very important question of the attitude toward Menshevism." [5] The serious political differences dividing Lenin and Trotsky up to this point were thereby reduced to an organizational misunderstanding which, moreover, permanently labelled Trotsky's old views as centrist.

He ended by paying dearly for his magnanimity, which served to encourage the profitable practice of falsifying the record of "Trotskyism." The pre-1917 division between him and Lenin was actually deeper than has been acknowledged by Deutscher and less a purely organizational affair than has been appreciated by Trotsky's later sympathizers and followers. It involved an historical division in the European labour and socialist movements over tactics. It could be traced as far back as the debate in the early Chartist movement between Feargus O'Connor and William Lovett, on the question of "physical force" and "moral force," that is, whether the claims against political and economic discrimination ought best be backed by strikes, general strikes, and similar physical confrontations with authority, or by broader appeals and political programmes. With the corresponding alterations, this difference may also be seen in the dispute between Bakunin and Marx over the issue of political abstention. Thus the Marxism of the Second International, the school of Lenin and Trotsky, accepted the primacy of political struggle, even if it rejected the suggestions of those, like Jaures and Bernstein, who sought to broaden its moral appeal and seek alliances with other classes. Marx himself, while he would have choked

[4] *My Life* (New York, 1929), p. 332.

[5] Ibid. p. 333.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on the famous remark of the German Social Democrat, Ignaz Auer, that "the general strike is general nonsense," was nevertheless in the habit of referring to strikes as a "lower form" of struggle.[6] In the youth of Lenin and Trotsky, champions of purely trade unionist strike struggles were more likely to be syndicalists than Marxists. The dispute in the Russian Social Democracy between the *Iskra* tendency and the "Economists" involved a complaint by the *Iskra-ites* about the undue encouragement for spontaneous strikes. Trotsky sided at first with Lenin and the *Iskra-ites*, but soon thereafter turned to his own brand of "Economism."

He was preceded in this by Rosa Luxemburg, whose case against the Polish Socialists' "social patriotic" policy of seeking national independence was accompanied by the charge that this movement had neglected the elementary task of assisting the Polish workers to form trade unions in order to defend their interests in disputes over wages and conditions. She warned that it would not be possible to prevent the Polish workers from presenting economic demands in the course of future revolutionary events even if they could not hope for a socialist Poland.[7] Trotsky also learned of this criticism of Polish socialism from the Polish revolutionary Jan Waclaw Machajski, whose essay, *The Evolution of Social Democracy*, he read during his first Siberian exile; it was, he reported, with Lenin's *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, the sensation of the exile circles. While Lenin argued for an "American" solution to Russia's agrarian question, that is, a vast redistribution of gentry land to the smallholder, Machajski saw the beginnings of a labour upsurge threatening to capitalism itself. It could be observed in the Lodz strike of 1892, in which some 60,000 strikers had to be suppressed by Cossack attacks, and similar outbreaks in Czestochowa in 1894, Bialystok in 1895, and Dabrowa in 1897. Machajski saw a possible "workers' revolution" sweeping away both gentry and bourgeoisie. More than that, he held Social Democracy itself to be an enemy of the working class, claiming that socialism would only liberate the intelligentsia. For him the principal antagonism was not between workers and bourgeois but between educated and uneducated.[8] Except for the "anarchistic" thesis of "the expropriation of the intelligentsia," which Trotsky could not yet accept, Machajski's ideas may have been a push in the direction of the theory of Permanent

[6] "In Posen, as Zabicki reported, the Polish workers (joiners, etc.) have brought a strike to a victorious end by the help of their colleagues in Berlin. This struggle against Monsieur le Capital—even in the subordinate form of the strike—is a very different way of getting rid of national prejudices from that of the bourgeois gentlemen with their peace declarations." Marx to Engels, 18 Aug. 1869 in *Marx—Engels Selected Correspondence* (New York, 1942), p. 263.

[7] Her case against Polish "social patriotism" is made in her article "Step by Step" in *Neue Zeit*, No. 6 (1897–1898), pp. 164–176, with Kautsky's appended note that "We cannot support its entire standpoint." For an orthodox reply, see "Res" (Feliks Perl), *Kwestya polska w oswietleniu "Social-demokracyi" polskiej* (Warsaw, 1907).

[8] A. Volski (J. W. Machajski), *Umstvennyi rabochii* (Geneva, 1905), part 1, pp. 41–49; *Burżuazyjna rewolucya a sprawa robotnicza* (Geneva, 1905), pp. 4–5.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Revolution. "For several months," Trotsky recalled, "the work of Makhaiskii [Machajski] was in the centre of attention of the Lena exiles. Bold in its verbal negations but lifeless and cowardly in its practical conclusions, it provided me with a strong inoculation against anarchism." [9] But by 1905 he was to recognize in economic strikes a force which would burst apart the previous notions of the Russian Social Democrats, those of Lenin included.

The theory of Permanent Revolution was a kind of distillation of the experiences of the St Petersburg Soviet in 1905 during the period of lockouts prompted by strikes for the eight-hour day. What, asked Trotsky, can a Democratic Dictatorship, of the type envisaged by Lenin, do when faced with closed factories? If it choose to reopen them and resume production at government expense, it must necessarily take the socialist path, yet

> Lenin believes that the contradiction between the proletariat's class interests and objective conditions will be resolved by the proletariat imposing a political limitation upon itself, and that this self-limitation will be the result of the proletariat's theoretical awareness that the revolution in which it is playing a leading role is a bourgeois revolution. Lenin transfers the objective contradiction onto the proletariat's consciousness and resolves it by means of a class asceticism which is rooted, not in religious faith, but in "scientific" schema. It is enough to see this intellectual construct clearly to realize how hopelessly idealistic it is.[10]

This accords entirely with the judgment expressed by Trotsky in his anti-Leninist polemic of 1904, *Our Political Tasks*, where Lenin is flayed for his indifference and even hostility to the proletariat's need for "self-activity." "Maximilian Lenin," Trotsky thought, had produced a formula—"A Jacobin who has realized the interest of a proletariat conscious of its mission is precisely what a Social Democrat is"—which revealed the meaning of his earlier challenge to the Economists, that a Social Democrat is "not a trade union bureaucrat but a tribune of the people." For Trotsky a Marxist could not be a Jacobin, could not put the interests of the nation over those of his class, could not break strikes as did the Jacobins in enforcing the Le Chapelier law of 1791, could not impose upon the proletariat a rigid scheme dependent entirely upon the latter's "class asceticism." He opposed to this Jacobinism the preferences of the leading Menshevik Pavel Axelrod for a broad labour party and organizations of general representative character, local dumas and zemstvos, organs which unite all labour and democratic

[9] *My Life*, p. 129. "Even in 1929—and to the day of his death—though Trotsky increasingly concerned himself with the bureaucratization of the Russian state, it never occurred to him to re-examine Makhaisky's views; he always cited them as self-evidently monstrous. But we cannot dispose of them quite so easily, and shall have to return to them again for further examination." Bertram Wolfe *Three Who Made a Revolution* (New York, 1962), p. 212. But Wolfe himself did not return to them.

[10] From "Our Differences" in Rosa Luxemburg's periodical *Przeglad Socjal—Democratyczny*, reprinted in L. Trotsky, *1905* (New York, 1971), pp. 314–315.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tendencies in common action. By 1905, the soviet would appear as the fruition of these hopes.

To be sure, Trotsky was arguing against the traditional conspiratorial methods of the Russian Jacobins, whose organization, Lenin had said, "should serve us as a model." If the reader should substitute "Socialist Revolutionary," the party claiming the heritage of *narodnichestvo*, for "Social Democratic" in Lenin's *Letter to a Comrade About Our Organizational Tasks* of 1904, Trotsky remarked, he would find a more natural relation of form to content. "We have before us an algebraic organizational formula from which may be derived Social Democratic content if one puts certain numerical values in place of the letters. But this 'plan' does not give us the concrete numbers." [11] Isaac Deutscher has contrasted this "individualistic protest" with Lenin's "business-like determination," calling Trotsky's arguments "gratuitous and erratic." This did not prevent him from finding prophetic Trotsky's famous statement about "substitutionism"—"The party organization would then substitute itself for the party as a whole; then the central committee would substitute itself for the organization; and finally a single dictator would substitute himself for the central committee." But Deutscher charged that to a "sixth sense, as it were, an intuitive sense of history." [12] This was necessary to retain the scheme according to which only organizational confusion kept Lenin and Trotsky apart until 1917, and the post-1917 Trotsky himself may be called the creator of that view. The pre-1917 Trotsky of the Permanent Revolution felt obliged to assume that the proletariat's struggle to emerge from its "class asceticism" by means of "self-activity" would necessitate the revolutionary overthrow not only of the existing state but the capitalist foundations of Russia's industrial order as well. Trotsky and Machajski, but not Lenin, saw the matter thus, perhaps dimly suspecting that they could not have done so had Russia possessed the conditions and organizations of a mature Western trade union movement, in which the struggle for "self-activity" might not compel revolution. There is no evidence of this kind of doubt in either man, however. Instead, Trotsky was led to suspect the German Social Democrats of opportunism. After all, their proletariat was vastly more powerful, better organized, and so the Russians thought, better led. Why did the German party seem so reluctant to use economic strikes to back its political demands? Machajski had answered this question in 1898 by asserting that Social Democratic Orthodoxy was every bit as "opportunistic" as Social Democratic Revisionism. Trotsky could not go that far, but could not help comparing Lenin's "Blanquist opportunism" with the "Revisionist opportunism" which seemed to persist in the German party.

Trotsky's differences with Lenin on the organization question were thus directly related to political differences. He feared Lenin's Democratic Dictatorship would apply the brakes to the proletariat's economic

[11] L. Trotsky, *Nos tâches politiques*, 1st ed. 1904 (Paris, 1970), p. 128.
[12] *The Prophet Armed—Trotsky: 1879–1921* (London, 1954), p. 97.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

struggle. Unlike Lenin, he also feared the "conservatism" of the European Social Democratic parties, particularly the German party, which "may at a certain moment become a direct obstacle to open conflict between the workers and bourgeois reaction and may hold back the direct struggle of the proletariat for power." [13] Thus despite the Germans' endorsement of Rosa Luxemburg's Mass Strike theory in 1906, the tendency of their splendid organizations was to reduce their commitment to strike action. Everywhere Social Democrats were becoming "critics of 'spontaneous strikes.'" [14] These strikes, however, in themselves suggested a contest for political power. "The Russian word *stachka* (strike) fully corresponds in the most precise sense," Trotsky argued, "with foreign words for 'coalition,' 'agreement,' 'understanding,' or 'unity.'" [15] And this in turn implied coalition in the sense that forces coalesce in government. Every strike was thus an embryo of the social revolution, as Machajski had preached. The formulation left little room for Leninist *partiinost'*, suggesting instead an almost complete identification of party and class. On this vital question, Trotsky's views were by no means typically Menshevik, but they could have nothing at all in common with Bolshevism. After his conversion, however, all this was reversed, as was shown by his advocacy, as a labour policy for the regime of War Communism, of the "militarization of labour" at the 10th Party Congress of 1920–21. Not unions but factory committees had been the main sources of Bolshevik support in 1917, but while the Bolsheviks could never displace Menshevik trade union leadership, these unions had become for Trotsky and the Bolsheviks "the primary material from which we constructed the Soviet State," in 1918 for "productive work," in 1919 for "military work." Their role could be reduced by 1920, Trotsky argued, "because at this point there were formed more fully Soviet organs implementing this work by themselves." [16] Trotsky's schemes for militarization of labour, still reflecting his obsession with the unity of party and class, nevertheless brought him back to the old *Iskra* position against trade unionism. By 1923, when economic strikes caused the dissident *Workers' Group* and *Workers' Truth* to raise objections to the regime of NEP, he reminded these groups of the "incompatibility of a fully developed workers' democracy with a regime of dictatorship." [17]

The Bolshevik Trotsky also altered his pre-1917 position towards the line of demarcation between Marxism and syndicalism. Before the Revolution he had insisted, despite his predilection for "Economism," that socialists must have a parliamentary strategy. This, after all, had been the lesson of the struggle of Marx against Bakunin. With Lenin, he now held it crucial to part company with the Social Democratic

[13] L. Trotsky, *Results and Prospects*, 1st ed. 1906 (New York, 1969), p. 114.
[14] *Bor'ba*, No. 4 (28 Apr 1914), p. 18.
[15] Ibid. No. 3 (12 Apr. 1914), p. 12.
[16] L. Trotsky, *Na proizvodstvennyi put'* (Moscow, 1921), p. 12.
[17] "First letter to the CC," *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik*, 8 Oct. 1923 in Naomi Allen (ed.), *The Challenge of the Left Opposition 1923–1925* (New York, 1975), p. 55.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"centrists and semi-centrists," while syndicalists and other anti-parliamentarians were to be considered good revolutionary material, provided that they accept the vanguard party. He thought this to be at any rate already implicit in their tradition. In 1923 he argued that

> French syndicalism—we repeat this—was and is, in its organization and theory, likewise *a party*. This is why it arrived, during its classic period, 1905–1907, at the theory of the "active minority," and not at the theory of the "collective proletariat." For what else is an active minority, held together by unity of conceptions, if not a party?[18]

Trotsky's "syndicalist who has adopted the vanguard party" was hardly distinguishable from Lenin's "Jacobin who has attached himself to the labour movement." He enjoyed initial successes with this argument among French syndicalists like Pierre Monatte, who had been denounced from the left as a union bureaucrat as early as 1907 by the anarcho-communist Errico Malatesta—an odd anarchist replication of Lenin's arguments against Economism. To the suggestion of Angel Pestana of the anarcho-syndicalist Spanish CNT that revolutions, including the French Revolution, had been possible without parties, Trotsky snapped "You're forgetting the Jacobins!"[19] Much of the Third International, and a good deal of the Fourth, was to be built on this basis of trade union militancy plus the vanguard party. Those like Klara Zetkin, Paul Levi, Julian Marchlewski and G. M. Serrati, whose roots were in the Second International, could not feel at home in this world. Men with more exotic methods—Levi called them *Turkestaner* not only for their occasional enforced Comintern exile—Kun, Rakosi, Pogany, and others, became the leading lights. Their *métier* was the "offensive," attempting to shock the Social Democratic workers into insurrection as in the German March Action of 1921. Both Lenin and Trotsky were forced to endorse the "offensive" in 1921, even while both knew they were being dragged down in quicksand.

AFTER the Kronstadt revolt, Trotsky's new Leninism led him to endorse measures to tighten party discipline and to favour the promotion of "Old Bolsheviks." But this delivered him bound hand and foot to his rival Zinoviev, who would always best him in any issue decided on the basis of Leninist seniority. The great myth befogging the followers of Trotsky since his expulsion from the Bolshevik party has been that he was routed in Russia by Stalin and the Thermidorean Bukharinists; yet the most telling blows against him were levelled before there had ever appeared a Stalinist theory of Socialism in One Country. In 1923–24 the *Leninist* case against Trotsky was established: Lenin had never endorsed Permanent Revolution against the "correct" slogan

[18] *Communism and Syndicalism*, 1st ed. 1923 (London, 1968), p. 24.
[19] Quoted in Alfred Rosmer, *Moscou sous Lénine: les origines du communisme* (Paris 1953), p. 101.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the Democratic Dictatorship (soon to be found in the work of Chiang Kai-shek and Pilsudski); Trotsky had underestimated the peasant,[20] Trotskyism was a Western social democratic deviation. As Zinoviev later explained it:

> You must keep the circumstances in mind. You must understand it was a struggle for power. The trick was to string together old disagreements with new issues. For this purpose "Trotskyism" was invented.[21]

The campaign against Trotsky also served as a springboard for Zinoviev's own wild tactical gyrations: a "Green" International of revolutionary peasant organizations, a coup attempt in Estonia, a campaign in support of the revolutionary American peasantry and their "La Follette Revolution" (this was the description given to the 1924 presidential campaign of Robert M. La Follette, on the Progressive ticket, by Zinoviev's protégé John Pepper [Joseph Pogany]), then a turn to the left, "Bolshevization" of the Comintern and denunciation of the European Social Democrats as "social fascists." In the process Zinoviev anticipated not only the theoretical line of Bukharin with his "face to the countryside," but most of the tactical arsenal of Stalinism as well. Estonia foreshadowed the "Canton Commune" of 1927; the left line of 1924–25 pointed to Stalin's Third Period views on "social-fascism."[22] Trotsky retained enough of his old Trotskyism to object strenuously to Zinoviev's tricks, but by 1926 he was reconciled with Zinoviev and formed a Joint Opposition to Stalin and Bukharin. And in arriving at the programme for the bloc, Trotsky made many concessions, finally settling not on his own oppositional ideas dating from 1923, but on Zinoviev's conception of a Leninism which had been correct on all essentials since 1905! This was what Trotsky's close associate Adolf Joffe probably meant when, in his farewell letter to Trotsky, he cautioned against abandoning the correct path "for the sake of an overvalued agreement, or compromise."[23] That which is understood as Trotskyism today contains a heavy component of Zinoviev's Leninism. The 1927 *Platform of the Left Opposition*, which most of today's Trotskyists take to be their founding document, calls for soviets in China as a step towards the Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry!

Deutscher has called the Trotsky-Zinoviev joint campaign of 1926–27 the "Decisive Contest."[24] However, of the culminating act of this

[20] Yet Trotsky had called the agrarian crisis "the decisive question of the international market" for Russian capitalism. *Bor'ba*, No. 1 (22 Feb. 1914), p. 8. Years later he said that "had the agrarian question been courageously solved by the bourgeoisie, the proletariat of Russia would not, obviously, have been able to arrive at the power in 1917." *In Defence of the October Revolution*, a lecture given to Danish students, 27 Nov. 1932 (London, 1971), p. 14.

[21] Quoted in L. Trotsky, *The Stalin School of Falsification* (New York, 1937), p. 92.

[22] See Siegfried Bahne, "'Sozialfaschismus' in Deutschland," *International Review of Social History*, Vol. X, 1965, part 2, pp. 211–45.

[23] Text in *My Life*, p. 537.

[24] *The Prophet Unarmed—Trotsky: 1921–1929* (London, 1959), Ch. 5.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

campaign, the demonstration of the Oppositionists of the 10th Anniversary of the Revolution, Trotsky later testified:

> I believe I can say, not in an active manner, the sympathy of the workers was on our side. But it was not a spirit of fight. The masses said: "We will see what we can do. We will see." It was a moment when the opposition had been banned two or three times . . . we did not overestimate our forces. We had an absolutely clear reckoning of the forces. It was only to show the party that we were calumniated in the press and that we said not to fire at the progressive worker but against the speculator, and to fulfil the testament of Lenin, and so on.[25]

The Oppositionists, that is, had no hope for a victory or a majority. They were on weak ground. More decisive for Trotsky, it now seems, was the contest with the Triumvirs in 1923–24, in which Trotsky, exempting Stalin from attack, had aimed his polemics only at Zinoviev and Brandler of the German Communist Party. He later admitted this to be a "mistake of secondary importance": "When I wrote my *Lessons of October*, that is, in the summer of 1924, it seemed to me that Stalin held a position further to the Left (i.e. Left-Centrist) than Zinoviev in the autumn of 1923. I was not quite abreast of the role of the secret centre of the majority faction apparatus."[26] The primacy of the fight against Zinoviev would have implied, he did not add, the legitimacy of a bloc with Stalin.

Nevertheless, Trotsky's disciples and admirers have striven to preserve the memory of the integrity of the period of the "golden age" of the Zinoviev Comintern. James Cannon, who built the largest section of the Trotskyist Fourth International, always retained real affection for Zinoviev, and actually supported Zinoviev's fight against an American defender of Trotsky's views, Ludwig Lore, in 1923–24.[27] Another attempt to rehabilitate Zinoviev has sought a solution in revising the dating and putting the start of Zinoviev's campaigns against Trotsky *after* the death of Lenin.[28] Trotsky himself made mighty efforts to collect the German and French Zinovievists for his International Left Opposition after his expulsion. Some, like Albert Trient, he had once admired for their defence of united front tactics; others, like the Fischer-Maslow group, had never excited his enthusiasm. They had all benefited from the "Zinovievite Bolshevization" at the Fifth Comintern Congress of 1924

[25] Preliminary Commission of Inquiry, John Dewey *et al.*, *The Case of Leon Trotsky* (New York, 1937), pp. 330–31.

[26] L. Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin*, 1st ed. 1929 (New York, 1970), p. 95. During the "decisive contest" of 1926–27, he tried to redirect his attack against Stalin's generalship in 1923: "In the estimation of major events, Comrade Stalin always displayed complete helplessness, his caution and cunning never capable of replacing theoretical preparation, wide political immersion and creative development, qualities which in Stalin were least perfected." "O Brandlere" *Trotsky Archive*, T 3082.

[27] James Cannon, *The First Ten Years of American Communism: A Report of a Participant* (New York, 1962), pp.181, 186–187. "We took the Comintern's political criticisms of Lore, like all its other political pronouncements, *for good coin* and thought it was up to Lore to straighten himself out with the Comintern" (p. 190).

[28] Gérard Rosenthal, *Mémoire pour la réhabilitation de Zinoviev* (Paris, 1962), p. 40.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but, Trotsky later argued, had not presented different policies but merely a capitulation to Moscow coupled with a "radicalism of phrases" which had been, in the crucial moment in 1923, "intimately related to the abject passivity of the Brandler leadership." [29]

Despite the extended case made against the generalship of Zinoviev during the "German October" of 1923 in his *Lessons of October*, the evidence does not show that Trotsky proposed a different policy on the factory councils or the Saxon Social Democratic government. And the failure of the policy could only add fuel to the tide of ultra-leftism that swept away "Trotskyism" at the Fifth Congress. He had never really established, among the French or Germans, his own intimate identification of Soviets with the united front, so comfortable for him with his "Axelrodist" past:

> The Soviet was the form most adequate to the united front at the beginning of the Revolution. It was the masses themselves who imposed this idea of the united front, which we not only accepted but in which we participated as a minority, in the certitude that we would vanquish our adversaries. And we have succeeded.[30]

This was difficult to square with his attacks on Paul Levi, probably the most effective proponent of united front tactics in the German communist movement. Trotsky and Lenin had both admitted Levi to be correct in criticizing the *putschist* March Action of 1921, yet they endorsed Levi's expulsion from the party for publishing his criticism in the non-party press. The lesson of the Levi episode seemed to be that it counted little to be correct in opposition—the party could adopt your position in every detail and still put you beyond the pale. Trotsky did not think at that moment that he would one day receive similar treatment; he emphasized discipline above everything and condemned Levi's "base treason to the party." [31] The Comintern hailed the courage and fighting spirit of the March Action, thereby encouraging the ultra-left even while it was attempting to move towards the united front. Those in the French party who supported unity with the syndicalists but not with the Social Democrats were already on a path towards the ultra-leftism of the Fifth Congress. After that Trotsky's supporters had to complain meekly that the Zinovievist slogan of a united front "only with the masses" meant the abandonment of the united front and that Social Democracy was not the "left wing of fascism." [32] Such distinctions in the end proved too subtle for the Comintern even in its pre-Stalin heyday. The Trotskyism of the 1930s would teach that the policies of Stalin and Bukharin betrayed the Comintern in the British General Strike, the Polish coup of 1926 and the Chinese Revolution of

[29] L. Trotsky, "Esche raz o Brandlere—Talgeimere," *Byulleten' Oppozitsii*, Nos. 1–2 (June–July 1929), pp. 24–25.

[30] L. Trotsky, *Le Salut du Parti Communiste Français* (Paris, 1922), pp. 23–24.

[31] Trotsky to Central Committee, 16 June 1921, *Trotsky Archive* T681.

[32] "Theses" of the French Opposition (23 Mar. 1925) *Trotsky Archive* T851.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

those years. It would have little to say about the Leninist leadership of the Zinoviev Comintern.

TROTSKY had ample opportunity to adopt much earlier the positions on which he stood at the end of his life. He could have chosen to adhere to a Fourth International when it was suggested by the anti-parliamentarians in 1921; contemptuously rejecting the idea as absurd, he had to proclaim the Fourth International as the burning task of the international proletariat after the failure of the Comintern to keep Hitler from power. The same story might be told about his concept of the Thermidorean degeneration of the Russian Revolution and the advent of Stalinist Bonapartism. The analogy with the French Revolution had served as a platform of protest on behalf of victims of persecutions by the Soviet state from the very first. From the moment the Bolsheviks began to see themselves approvingly as Jacobins, there were those who, like the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists, argued that Bolshevik centralism and the subordination of the factory committees recalled the Jacobin suppression of the *enragés* in 1793–94. Complaints of the degeneration of the revolution had been raised in the party as well. Bukharin had called the party's policy a degeneration towards "state capitalism" in 1918; in 1923, Bogdanov and Miasnikov called the NEP the New Exploitation of the Proletariat. In 1927, V. M. Smirnov, one of the leaders of the Democratic Centralist group, under fire from the party centre and attempting to make common cause with Trotsky's opposition, promoted the theory of an already established Thermidorean regime. In the *Platform of the Fifteen*, Smirnov claimed that the Soviet Union was now ruled by a Kulak Democracy, presenting itself first in the charge of the Central Committee in 1923–24 that Trotsky was hostile to the peasant, then coming into its own with the 13th Party Congress and the triumph of the Bukharin pro-peasant line. Workers' Democracy having been defeated, only a new revolution could restore it to health by subordinating the party and state apparatus and ruthlessly uprooting small proprietorship in the countryside, the real source of the degeneration.[33] Trotsky admitted Thermidor to be a possible danger, but resisted Smirnov's notion that the party was a "corpse," an idea which could not fit with his strategy of loyal opposition. When the Decemists could not be persuaded, Trotsky broke with them.

Even while he clung to these hopes of reforming the Comintern, a sort of new International of anti-parliamentarians was anticipating him. Miasnikov's exile group in Berlin began calling for a Fourth International. This was supported generally by the groups of Karl Korsch, the remnants of the KAPD, their former co-thinker Paul Mattick's United Workers Party in Chicago, Albert Weisbord's Communist League

[33] Zavarian, Emel'ianov, Sapronov, V. M. Smirnov, *et al.*, "Platform of the Fifteen," *Trotsky Archive* T964. This argument would be the basis for postwar Trotskyists, such as Ernest Mandel, to argue that the Stalinist impositions on Eastern Europe were on a *capitalist* basis of small peasant proprietorship.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Struggle in New York, and scattered groups in Europe. Most of these held to the old line of left opposition of Anton Pannekoek and Hermann Gorter, against which Lenin had argued in 1920. Some, like Mattick, rejected Lenin in favour of Marx. Most of the others argued against participation in electoral activity and trade unions, holding that only through factory committees and Soviets could the workers conquer, with or without a vanguard party. They, along with the syndicalists, had a real impact on those Trotsky sought to recruit for his International Left Opposition (a Fourth International was still out of the question for him). Hugo Urbahns of the *Leninbund* was at first friendly to the opposition, but he called it "red imperialism" when Stalin refused to cede the Chinese Eastern Railway to China in 1929. Trotsky answered in almost exactly the terms he later used to defend the lands allotted to Soviet influence under the Hitler-Stalin pact. "Urbahns fails to distinguish," he insisted, "between workers' Russia and bourgeois China." [34] In fact none of the leftists, even the Fischer-Maslow group, thought Russia to be any sort of proletarian state. Trotsky was forced to conclude that he was out of his element. There were, he said, a left, right and centre in international communism. The left was the type of the "offensive," a "formal radicalism," which on closer inspection reveals itself to be a "poisonous, ultra-left scepticism." Moreover, its constant tinkering with the idea of a Leninist party revealed that for it the Opposition "serves only as a stage in the passage from Marxism to syndicalism, trade unionism or simply scepticism as such." [35] Ironically, this criticism was directed at the followers of Amadeo Bordiga, for whose leadership of a "genuine communist party," Lenin and Trotsky had been willing to tear the Italian Socialist Party to shreds in 1921.

EVEN worse indignities ensued after 1933 when Trotsky was finally forced to issue his own call for a Fourth International and once more to dust off the theory of the Soviet Thermidor. He still insisted that the USSR was a workers' state, objecting to Urbahns's defence of the regime on the basis of the "progressive" qualities of its "state capitalism." This actually might have been adduced from a too literal reading of Lenin's *Left-Wing Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality* of 1918, where Lenin spoke of "state capitalist" measures (that is those in imitation of German war economy) that would eventually support the construction of socialism (this was before War Communism had taken hold as Bolshevik policy). Trotsky protested, against Urbahns's formulation, that Soviet economic policy played a *reactionary* role because it sought to tear itself away from the worldwide division of labour. State capitalism appears, he argued, when the productive forces "pound against the barriers of private property" and the state seeks to "pacify

[34] "*Zashchita sovetskoi respubliki i oppozitsiya*," *Trotsky Archive* T3234.
[35] "*Pis'mo italianskim levym kommunistam*," 25 Sept. 1929, *Trotsky Archive* T3240.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the mutiny of the productive forces with a police club." Thus protectionism demands liquidation of values, suppression of technology and "disrupting the monetary system which will be very much needed for socialist planning." [36] At issue was not simply Lenin's plan of 1918 for an imitation of German war economy under the rubric of "state capitalism," but a definition of progress in the international economy according to the requirements of a worldwide division of labour.

Still less could Trotsky support the view that power in the Soviet Union had been usurped by a "new class" drawing its livelihood from the extraction of surplus from the proletariat. This had been suggested by Lucien Laurat, Social Democratic colleague of Leon Blum. Against Laurat, Trotsky charged that:

> The compilator is obviously unaware that his entire theory has been formulated, only with much more fire and splendour, over 30 years ago, by the Russo-Polish revolutionist Makhaisky, who was superior to his French vulgarizer in that he awaited neither the October Revolution nor the Stalinist bureaucracy in order to define the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as a scaffold for the commanding posts of an exploiting bureaucracy. But even Makhaisky did not suck the theory out of his thumb: he only "deepened" sociologically and economically the anarchistic prejudices against state socialism. Makhaisky, by the way, also utilized Marx's formulae, but in a manner more consistent than Laurat's: according to Makhaisky, the author of *Das Kapital* covered up with malice aforethought, in his formulae of reproduction (Vol. II), that portion of the surplus value which would be devoured by the socialist intelligentsia (the bureaucracy).[37]

The ghosts disposed of in 1898 had come back to haunt Trotsky, and would continue to do so right down to the end of his life. But Machajski's Intelligentsia was the class of white collar workers which, as Bernstein's New Middle Estate, had figured so prominently in the debates of German Social Democrats in the 1890s. If Trotsky accepted Machajski's term as synonymous with his "bureaucracy," was the "political revolution," for which he now called, to be directed against all of Russia's white collar workers? Trotsky urged the political revolution merely for the purpose of subordinating these state employees to the will of soviet organs, to transform the former from a "bureaucracy" to an "administration." He did not succeed in showing how usurpation could be prevented in the framework of a one-party system. He had

[36] L. Trotsky, *The Class Nature of the Soviet State*, 1st ed. 1933 (London, 1968), p. 15. This is a restatement of the case for the import of Western capital made in *Whither Russia*? of 1925. It has prompted the provocative thesis about the five-year plan that, "Only in the limited sense that Stalin was reviving War Communist policies can it be said with Deutscher that Trotsky was the inspirer of Soviet industrialization. Still concerned with the paramount problem of isolation, Trotsky himself would have greeted such faint praise with total disdain." Richard B. Day, *Leon Trotsky and the Politics of Economic Isolation* (Cambridge, 1973), p. 187.

[37] *Class Nature of the Soviet State*, p. 19. On Machajski's doctrines, A. D'Agostino, "Intelligentsia Socialism and the 'Workers' Revolution': The Views of J. W. Machajski," *International Review of Social History*, Vol. 14 (1969), part 1, pp. 54–89.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

never wished to discuss these questions which, from the beginning of the Revolution, he was glad to leave to the theoreticians of the far-left sects. But in his banishment they fought their way into his world.

He had rejected the Soviet Thermidor, proclaimed by Professor Ustrialov in 1923, and by the Decemists in 1926–27. He had admitted Thermidor a danger, but not an accomplished fact as long as there appeared a glimmer of hope in the German revolution. After 1933 he was forced to a dreary reassessment. "The Thermidor of the Great Russian Revolution," he decided, "is not before us but already far behind. The Thermidoreans can celebrate, approximately, the 10th anniversary of their victory."[38] The 10th anniversary in 1935? Thermidor consummated by the bloc of Stalin and Bukharin? Apparently Trotsky had taken a second look at the views of Smirnov, but had found them incompatible with his defence of the Joint Opposition of 1927. The Thermidor could not be dated from Zinoviev's 1923 attacks on "Trotskyism," as Smirnov had done, for that would call into question the terms of his own reconciliation with Zinoviev. The discussion on Thermidor became at once an exercise in dating death and in death by dating. The 1927 manifesto of Miasnikov's group, *Rabochii put' k vlasti* (*The Workers' Road to Power*), had held the degeneration of the Revolution to have set in as a result of the trade union debate of 1920–21. Some Belgian adherents of Trotsky's Fourth International put the date back further still:

> The roots of the bureaucracy and of its omnipotence are not found in Stalinism alone but in that regime which gave rise to the decrees of the 1918–1920 period and of the NEP, to the struggle of the Soviet government against the attempts of the working masses to control production directly.[39]

That took Trotsky back to criticism made by anarchists and syndicalists for whom the workers' control exercised by the factory committees of 1917 was the highest achievement of the Revolution. The first measures of the Soviet state, taken in 1918, to subordinate factory committees to trade unions and to place general direction in the hands of a Supreme Council of National Economy (*Vesenkha*), were seen by the proponents of workers' control as the beginning of its degeneration.

Trotsky could not possibly suffer this sort of dating, which called all of Bolshevism to account for a role in the Thermidor. He had to insist on a distinction between those measures taken to defend the regime in difficult circumstances—the prohibition of other Soviet parties, the suppression of the Kronstadt Commune, the banning of platform factions in the Bolshevik Party, the retreat before the peasant symbolized by NEP—and those taken by bureaucratic centrism to shore up its

[38] L. Trotsky, *The Workers' State and the Question of Thermidor and Bonapartism*, first ed. 1935 (London, 1968), p. 61.

[39] A. Hennault, "*Les Classes dans le Russie des Soviets*," *Cahiers d'Étude de la Ligue des Communistes Internationalistes* (Paris, 1935), p. 39.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

power over society. It was permissible for Lenin and Trotsky to retreat before the peasant and to tighten the regimen in the party, but in the service of the Stalin-Bukharin policies similar retreats and exactions had meant the death of the party. It can probably not be said that Trotsky succeeded in convincing his followers of the accuracy of this subtle dating of Thermidor. Few could recite his version of the precise stages of the degeneration; Trotskyism was established less on the basis of its science on the Russian Question than on its fidelity to internationalism. "It is absolutely indisputable that the domination of a single party served as a juridical point of departure for the Stalinist totalitarian system," he admitted, "but the reason for this development lies neither in Bolshevism nor in the prohibition of other parties as a temporary war measure, but in the number of defeats of the proletariat in Europe and Asia." [40]

The Zinovievists had been internationalists, incapable of imagining Bolshevism without its world perspective and revolutionary dynamism. That was why Lenin, despite their obvious weaknesses, had regarded them as "irreplaceable capital." Yet, even while asserting this, Trotsky was finally compelled to admit, in his biography of Stalin, that the first blows against internationalism were delivered by the same Zinoviev:

> From 1923 to 1926, upon the initiative and at first under the leadership of Zinoviev, the struggle against Marxist internationalism under the name of "Trotskyism" was carried on under the slogan of saving the Old Guard. The Opposition was accused of undermining the Old Guard of Bolshevism.[41]

This position, taken by Trotsky at the end of his life, is different from that expressed earlier, coming very close to the Smirnov thesis on Kulak Democracy, but shrinking from Smirnov's view of Zinoviev as the real founder of Bukharinism. It is at least different from the theory of Thermidor appearing in his 1935 essay, *The Workers' State and the Question of Thermidor and Bonapartism* and in *The Revolution Betrayed* of 1937. The theory expressed in these works made the Thermidor primarily an expression of the bureaucracy and the party Right, inextricably connected to the leasing of land, the exactions of the NEP men and related developments. The left turn initiated in 1928 was only a temporary "zigzag" preliminary to an anticipated subsequent lurch back to the right. And Trotsky, foreshadowing a Deutscher theme, even took credit for the successes of the "zigzag":

> The Stalinist bureaucracy smashed the Left Opposition in order to safeguard and entrench itself as a privileged caste. But in the struggle for its own positions it found itself compelled to take from the programme of the Left Opposition all those measures which alone made it possible to save the social basis of the Soviet state.

[40] L. Trotsky, *Stalinism and Bolshevism*, 1st ed. 1937 (New York, 1960), p. 22.

[41] L. Trotsky, *Stalin: An Appraisal of the Man and His Influence*, first ed. 1941 (New York, 1967), p. 400.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> That is a priceless political lesson! . . . it shows how a correct political line enables a Marxist grouping to fructify developments even when the victors of the "second chapter" run roughshod over the revolutionists of the "first chapter."[42]

But Trotsky's last word on the subject of Thermidor, in revising the role of Zinoviev, also raises questions about his own struggles for Leninism.

TROTSKY never deserted the analogy between Bolshevism and Jacobinism. Uncomfortable as it was to accept the correspondence between Jacobin treatment of Hébertists, and his and Lenin's treatment of anarchists and syndicalists, he knew that it made no sense to say Thermidor without identifying with Jacobinism. Trotsky never incorporated NEP into this scheme, a compelling addition since it introduced the property relations upon which, by his own admission, the Thermidor rose, but troublesome since it was introduced by the Jacobins Lenin and Trotsky. For Trotsky this retreat carried out by Bolshevism was not Thermidorean because, in the final analysis, his measure of progress and regress in the Russian Revolution was not dependent on Russian but *European* conditions. This alone should have constituted ample reason to discard the analogy with French revolutionaries who took power at a time of military catastrophe and directed a great national rally. The Bolsheviks were "defeatists" who directed what the KAPD stalwart Otto Rühle called a "pacifist putsch," and frankly faced as the first necessity of their revolution the partition of Russia. Nothing could separate them further from men who, even while they recognized the primacy of the social question, still saw *the nation* as the vehicle of their aspirations.

A revolutionist who lived of necessity in the world of classes, in exile Trotsky had more and more to take account of the world of nations, and during his last exile, had to confront the threat of the latter engulfing the former. While he bent every effort to the creation of a Fourth International and called for the overthrow of the Stalin leadership in the Soviet Union, he proclaimed constantly the inevitability of a new general war. Revolution he envisaged as the necessary outcome of the conflict, by obvious analogy with the previous war. But that presupposed the marshalling of sufficient forces to destroy the Hitler regime. He had hoped that defeat of fascist hopes in Spain would raise an anti-Hitler revolt in Germany, but after the outcome of the Spanish war became clear, he reluctantly looked in the direction of the United States, which would finally throw its power into European affairs with earth shaking results.

In this respect as well Trotsky strove to be a good Leninist, who agreed with the founder of Bolshevism that, with or without the general European revolution, the United States would be a decisive, perhaps even *the* decisive factor in world politics. This they adduced from her

[42] *Workers' State and the Question of Thermidor and Bonapartism*, p. 43.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

demonstrated industrial capacity and seemingly inexhaustible internal market. Admiration for the American model of agrarian relations had prompted Lenin, in his *Development of Capitalism in Russia* of 1899, to suggest it as an alternative to the Russian "Junker" economy. It might even serve as a beacon for Western Europe. "Compared with the USA," he wrote during the war, "Europe as a whole denotes economic stagnation. On the present economic basis, that is under capitalism, a United States of Europe would signify an organization of reaction to retard America's more rapid development. The times when the cause of democracy and socialism was associated with Europe alone have gone forever." [43] Lenin opposed the slogan of Briand for a United States of Europe not only because it lacked "economic content," but because it could mean "plundering the more rapidly developing countries, Japan and America."

Trotsky had in fact been suspected during the war of secret sympathies for the Entente by some who found his *War and the International* to have concentrated fire too single-mindedly on German Social Democracy. At the time of capitulation to Germany at Brest-Litovsk it was Trotsky who first raised the possibility of contracting for military support against Germany with the Allies. After the war, while Bolsheviks banked everything on the German revolution, Trotsky presented the case as not least a question of breaking the French hold on Europe. Industrially and technically a unit, Europe was, he thought, being "Balkanized" by French enforcement of the Versailles treaty provisions. Moreover, France would not be content until she had "broken up" the Germany created by Bismarck. He regarded the French invasion of the Ruhr in 1923 as a "piece of violent insanity accompanied by far-sighted calculation (the final disruption of Germany)—a combination not unknown to the psychiatrist." [44] To prevent this he was prepared to endorse the Zinovievist slogan of a "Workers' and Peasants' Government" for Germany: a bloc with Social Democrats he elsewhere castigated as agents of American imperialism was here required to help reshape Europe. The next step, a Europe of workers and peasants, would proceed to the drafting of a reparations budget, to be financed by a graduated income tax, "levies" on capital, and special taxes on "wealth plundered in wartime." He did not call for nationalization of capital goods. Would this be a Dictatorship of the Proletariat? Trotsky held that "only a conditional reply can be given this question," and hinted that it might be a "stage" in that direction.

IN the restabilized Europe of the period after the Dawes Plan, Trotsky hoped for a Socialist United States of Europe for use, not only against Balkanization by the French, but against the United States. This

[43] V. I. Lenin, "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe," *Sotsial—Demokrat*, 23 Aug. 1915 in *Selected Works* (Moscow, 1967), Vol. 1, p. 670.

[44] L. Trotsky, "The United States of Europe" (1923) in *Fourth International* (July 1943), p. 221.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dovetailed without difficulty with the Rapallo orientation in Soviet foreign policy, according to which Germany would be encouraged to resist with Soviet aid the exactions of Versailles. Trotsky assumed as well that the main antagonism in world politics was between the United States and Britain. Promoted with maximum energy by France, the conflict of the two naval powers would take the form of US liberation of English areas. "Through the slogans 'freedom of the seas' and 'the open door,'" he wrote in 1929, "the United States can impress China, India, Egypt and all the other naval dominions of Great Britain." [45] Against the spread of American influence, the unity of Europe was an absolute necessity. The rise to power of the American colossus would probably not be disturbed by revolution for "decades" or more. For Europe, however, revolution would be on the order of the day. When hearing things like this, none of his disciples dreamed of calling Trotsky a Lovestonite or accusing him of "American Exceptionalism," although they clutched at their throats when such notions arose in the American socialist movement. Yet America seemed to Trotsky to have every advantage, and to be assuming the hegemonic position in Europe. Against this a mighty rally would be imperative. That was the position he maintained up to Nazism's assumption of power. Up to that point in Trotsky's story, Deutscher could find much to admire in Trotskyism. It still represented a loyal opposition within the official communist movement; Trotsky had instructed his followers to regard themselves as "Bolshevik-Leninists" and to refrain from duplicating the "mass work" of the Communist parties while they patiently lobbied for re-admission. After that point Trotsky reluctantly accepted Smirnov's view that the Bolshevik Party was a "corpse," and set about breaking his followers from their remaining allegiance to the Communist International. Deutscher finds this Trotsky "quixotic," while he grants every line of criticism aimed at Stalinism to be true. Stalin may be wrong, but for Deutscher there are no politics outside the official communist movement. He seems to wince as Trotsky enjoins his followers to enter the Social Democratic parties and loyal Communists are treated to the sight of Trotskyists "inveighing against Stalinism from Social Democratic platforms." [46]

Trotsky had made drastic changes in his anticipations, and none more than those concerning the United States. After Hitler's assumption of power, the United States appeared in a more positive, or perhaps it should be put, *even* more positive a light. It did so because of the clearly retrograde tendencies in the world economy, given sharp impetus by fascist economic nationalism. Trotsky did not, of course, "discover" departures from economic liberalism and free trade in 1933; rather he suggested that national departures from economic liberalism had been absorbed in the past by the corresponding development of inter-

[45] L. Trotsky, "*Razoruzhenie i Soedinennye Shtaty Evropy*," *Byulleten' Oppozitsii*, No. 6 (Oct. 1929), p. 12.
[46] *The Prophet Outcast*, p. 272.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dependence in the world economy. Now that the gold standard was in tatters and a round of competitive devaluations threatened to reduce world trade to zero point, isolated national markets must survive by lowering their sights and taking measures against "over-developed" technology, justified of course by the "eternal" laws of racial community. But Trotsky observed other laws, and in this case he cited the Law of the Productivity of Labour, to which he had earlier referred in arguing for integration of the Soviet and world economies: "We know the fundamental law of history—in the end that regime will conquer which ensures human society a higher economic standard." [47] And European business, he asserted, also knew this to be the case; at a certain point a new conjuncture must be arrived at and the signal given for a revival of economic life. That nation which pioneered mass production would also have the capacity to pound down tariff walls:

> It would seem that the spot from which the lever of Archimedes was to turn the world over had been found. But the old planet refuses to be turned over. Everyone defends himself against everybody else, protecting himself by a customs wall and a hedge of bayonets. Europe buys no goods, pays no debts, and in addition arms itself. With five miserable divisions starved Japan seizes a whole country. The most advanced technique in the world suddenly seems impotent before obstacles basing themselves on a lower technique. The law of the Productivity of Labour seems to lose its force. But it only seems so. The basic law of human history must inevitably take revenge on derivative and secondary phenomena. Sooner or later, American capitalism must open up ways for itself throughout the length and breadth of our entire planet. By what methods? By *all* methods. A high coefficient of productive force denotes also a high coefficient of destructive force. Am I preaching war? Not in the least. I am not preaching anything.[48]

Was he preaching war? It was an ambiguous position between the world of classes and the world of nations. Against the Leninism expressive of a revolutionary will to leap over the barriers of world capitalism from the springboard of the East European revolution, there now appeared the more prosaic development of superior North American technique, itself still capable of revolutionizing the world. He had called the technical preponderance of American industry "the central question of European and world history" as far back as 1924. A year later he suggested that a new "dynamic equilibrium" of productive forces established by world capitalism could *widen* the distance in economic development between Russia and the West. If this were so,

> To put it more simply, it would mean that we had made a mistake in the fundamental estimation of history. It would mean that capitalism has not yet exhausted its "missions" in history and that

[47] L. Trotsky, *Whither Russia?*, 1st ed. 1925 (Colombo, 1973), p. 58.

[48] L. Trotsky, "Nationalism and Economic Life," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (April 1934), p. 402.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> the present imperialist phase was not one of decline of capitalism, its last convulsions, but the dawn of a new prosperity for it.[49]

He assumed that no new dynamic equilibrium could be established except on a world scale with world-wide division of labour. A fascist Europe could therefore only promise further division into blocs and redivision of the blocs. The enemy of autarchy became of necessity an agent of progress. Were this suggestion pursued consistently, which Trotsky was by no means able to do, it would dictate that his followers, especially those in America, prepare not for revolution but for war.

COULD Trotskyists vote for policies of rearmament before the threat of fascist aggression? Here again Trotsky found himself in extreme theoretical difficulties, in view of the traditional association of Leninist politics with the slogan of Defeatism, "the advantages," as Lenin had put it, "of having one's country defeated in war." The Fourth International, like the Comintern, was schooled in the tradition of ruthless opposition to the "social-patriotism" of the European Social Democrats. Yet Trotsky knew that this attitude entailed a danger of slippage into ordinary pacifism and isolation from most of the Social Democratic trade unions. Against this he was willing to take the daring step of instructing Trotskyists in 1934–35, to enter Social Democratic parties. Some Trotskyists agreed with James Burnham's sensible suggestion that they remain there permanently, but splits and expulsions brought them out to establish formally a Fourth International in 1938. The new International was full of ultra-left members for whom any association with mass organizations of the labour movement meant betrayal. It was easy to connect this preservation of "independence" with the purest and most uncompromising line on Defeatism. Trotsky felt himself compelled in building a new movement to swim against a tide of political absurdities presented as the purest Leninism. Left critics had called his proposals for entry into the labour and Social Democratic parties the worst sort of betrayal, and accused him of "liquidationism." The British Independent Labour Party, after breaking with the Labour Party over the formation of the National Government in 1931, took up discussion with Trotsky, but could not countenance his suggestion to move away from the British Communists and towards the Labour Party. With its Brighton Conference of 1935, the Labour Party began to move in the direction of support for rearmament and a sterner policy against fascism; the conference had voted in favour of sanctions against Italy's actions in Ethiopa, largely because its trade union representatives were gradually emancipating themselves from the pacifism of much of the party's leadership. Many ILP members feared that Trotsky's policy which called for closer ties with the trade unions, involved dangerous concessions to social-patriotism. Trotsky wanted the impossible: preservation of Lenin's Defeatism without the slightest concession to

[49] *Whither Russia?*, pp. 79–80.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pacifist sentiment. After Munich he attacked the peace programme of the ILP and its leader James Maxton's support for the appeasement policy of Chamberlain. "The party that tolerates a head like Maxton and acts like that of public solidarity with Chamberlain," he charged, "is not a socialist party but a miserable pacifist clique."[50]

Yet Trotsky himself had made broad reinterpretations of Lenin's Defeatism, which he had never endorsed during World War One. Its various formulas—"defeat is the lesser evil," "defeat facilitates revolution," "wish defeat," "do not halt before the risk of defeat"—could be distilled in the assertion that the struggle against war presupposed civil war. With that much Trotsky agreed; but for him preaching defeat had not been the same as preaching revolution. Even in October 1917 he and Lenin had been required to assert the necessity of the assumption of power by the Soviets in order to recapture Riga from German forces.[51] That gives an indication how little defeatist the Russian workers were. Lenin's slogan "wish defeat" expressed the idea that the defeated army was a definite aid to revolution; that is, for Lenin it was a case of "revolution because of defeat," while for Trotsky it was "defeat because of revolution."[52] Trotsky argued in 1938 that Lenin's formula had been: *given a revolutionary movement*, the defeat of one's own government is a lesser evil: "Lenin did not say nor did he wish to say anything else."[53] This was the way Trotsky's followers understood their policy on war. His French sympathizers put it in these terms:

> The formula of Lenin, "Defeat is the lesser evil" does not signify that the defeat of one's own country in war will be preferable to the defeat of another, but that military defeat provoked by the development of a revolutionary movement is incomparably more advantageous for the proletariat and the people than military victory assured by an "*union sacrée*."[54]

Lenin's Defeatism had gone much further, recognizing the virtue of defeat in provoking revolution. In Lenin's formulation defeat has lost its terror; in a world of agonizing and fruitless trench combat, more capable of decimating forces than occupying terrain, little need be feared from failure at the front, from mass desertions or confused loyalties of the garrison of the capital. Even the partition of the Russian Empire, accomplished by the peace of Brest-Litovsk, does not stop the Revolution. Imperial Russia can be partitioned without crushing Soviet Russia, even if the latter is practically reduced to the territory of the old

[50] "*Centrisme et Quatrième Internationale*," *Bulletin de la Quatrième Internationale*, No. 1 (June 1939), p. 10.

[51] L. Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution* (London, 1967), Vol. 2, pp. 304–05.

[52] Hal Draper, "The Myth of Lenin's Defeatism," *New International* (Jan.–Feb. 1954), pp. 39–59.

[53] "A Step Towards Social Patriotism," *New International* (7 Mar. 1939), in *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1938–39* (New York, 1969), pp. 23–24.

[54] *La Quatrième Internationale et La Guerre: Thèse approuvée par le Secrétariat de la Ligue des Communistes—Internationalistes (bolchevistes—leninistes)* (Geneva, 1 May 1934), p. 19.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Moscow principality. In these terms, Bolsheviks could see defeat as the sole logical response to their country's own strategic bankruptcy. But would it be possible to call for defeat in the midst of a war in which movement had been restored to the battlefield? Would such a war present a situation in which *defeat excludes revolution*?

Trotsky did not expect a war of movement, but rather one in which operations would begin strategically where the last war had left off. No secret weapons would upset the balance of forces engaged; no army of select specialists would replace the *levée en masse* of modern nations. Air power, contrary to the theories of the Douhets and Mitchells, might yield great tactical successes but no final strategic solution. Despite the rise in importance of motor transportation, modern "nations in arms" would require, "as in the time of Napoleon, one horse for every three men." The army would remain the principal force for attack and defence, and the basis of the army would continue to be the infantry. The war operations of recent memory, in the Far East, Abyssinia and Spain, "had sufficed to recall strategical thought from heaven to earth." [55] Trotsky was confident of the defences on the Soviet western frontier against a possible German attack. The Soviet distances were great, and the "dividing wedge" of Poland and Rumania served to neutralize the advantage of superior German railroads. Trotsky was thinking in terms of a war not greatly dissimilar to the First World War, in which infantry transported by rail would cast themselves into battle along an extended front and mutually exhaust the forces of competing powers. He did not reckon with the tank or *Blitzkreig*. He drew essentially the same conclusion drawn by other military observers of the campaigns in Spain, that tanks in formation had not basically changed the pace or nature of warfare, a conclusion drawn also by the Soviet armour expert D. G. Pavlov, who had, however, to be ignominiously dismissed when German armoured forces made their big penetrations in 1941. Trotsky's assessment was in tune with his previous views on the value of the militia as opposed to the standing army, and his criticism in the 1920s of Marshal Tukhachevsky's theory of "Proletarian Warfare," an early foreshadowing of *Blitzkrieg*.

TROTSKY'S military views thus help to illuminate his Leninism. He was struggling to preserve the old left Zimmerwaldism which he himself had not endorsed—one of the early mistakes of "Trotskyism." In response to those of his followers who asserted the necessity of defeating the fascist powers as a first priority, he asked:

Just how is a military victory of decaying democracies over Germany

[55] L. Trotsky, "If World War Comes Again," *Yale Review*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (June 1938), pp. 790–92. Trotsky's view matches that of the leading British military theorist, B. H. Liddell Hart, whose arguments for the superiority of defence included the assertion that in Spain "perhaps the most probable alternative to a stalemate is that continued attacks may turn the scales of war against the attacking side." *The Times*, London, 3 Apr. 1937. Quoted in R. J. Sontag, *A Broken World, 1919–1939* (New York, 1971), p. 312.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> and Italy capable of liquidating fascism, even if only for a limited period? If there were any grounds for believing that a new victory of the familiar and slightly senile Entente (minus Italy) can work such miraculous results, i.e. those counter to socio-historical laws, then it is necessary not only to "desire" this victory but to do everything in our power to bring it about. Then the Anglo-French social-patriots would be correct.[56]

Without solid commitments from the United States, the Western democracies could not withstand the advances of German power. The bubble of the people's front against fascism must eventually burst. In its place, Trotsky argued, one found a Munich and a four-power front among Germany, Italy, England and France, which must in practice prove to be an inherently unstable compound. At the same time, however, a Europe of the Big Four set the stage for Stalin's abandonment of collective security.

With the conclusion of the Hitler-Stalin pact and the opening of Eastern campaigns for a fourth partition of Poland, Trotsky charged that the pact would

> greatly extend the duration of the war and bring closer the moment of intervention of the United States. By itself this intervention is absolutely inevitable. . . . To make the Kremlin change its policy there remains only one way, but a sure one. It is necessary to give Herr Hitler such a decisive blow that Mr Stalin will cease to fear him. In this sense, it is possible to say that the most important key to the Kremlin's policy is now in Washington.[57]

The groupings Trotsky called "centrist" (actually their views were rather similar to early "Trotskyism")—the Spanish POUM, Marceau Pivert's PSOP, the British ILP and the Independent Labor League of America led by Jay Lovestone—were all wrestling with the same problem. They felt the contrary pull of desiring to stay out of the war and recognizing the necessity of stopping Nazism. Bertram Wolfe, who would change his views on the war shortly, called Trotsky a warmonger for his assertion of the inevitability of US entry. "Preachers of inevitability," when closely scrutinized, he charged, turn out to be "preachers of desirability."[58] Trotsky could have answered that the war was not his doing, but Wolfe was in a sense correct. In the face of such enormities, calmness and sanity are only purchased in the coin of *amor fati*, as Trotsky had noted many years earlier:

> The whole of history is an enormous machine in the service of our ideals. It works with barbarous slowness, with insensitive cruelty, but it works. We are sure of it. But when its omnivorous mechanism swallows up our life's blood for fuel, we feel like calling out to it with all the strength we still possess: Faster! Do it Faster![59]

[56] L. Trotsky, "A Step Towards Social Patriotism," p. 24.
[57] L. Trotsky, "The U.S. Will Participate in the War," *The New York Times*, 4 Oct. 1939, in *Writings 1939–40*, p. 11.
[58] Bertram Wolfe, "War-Monger—'Prophet,'" *Workers Age*, 14 Oct. 1939, p. 4.
[59] L. Trotsky, *1905*, p. 351.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In fact Trotsky at the end took a view of the international situation little different from that of Winston Churchill, both in analysis and prescription. He attempted to "balance" this view with Left Zimmerwaldism, the confidence that the coming war could not be fought without letting loose the tempest of revolution. For the moment, the most important thing, he demanded, was to master the art and technique of war, to learn to use "the rifle, the hand grenade, the cannon, the submarine." The best trade unionists must be the best soldiers. But what are we, asked his bewildered American follower James Cannon, can we be called militarists? "Yes," Trotsky answered, "in a certain sense—we are proletarian socialist revolutionary militarists." [60]

One can imagine Cannon throwing up his hands before the task of balancing these contradictory elements, which could have so little in common with the normal notion of opposition to a government in war. If Trotsky's views had been identical with the broad Defeatism of Lenin, things would have been easier for his disciples to grasp. He had reminded his followers, however, that their tasks were not simply those of opposition. "At the same time as we boycotted with every means material help to Japan," he told his Australian followers, "we would on the contrary accuse the government of not sufficiently supporting China, that is, of betraying her ally." [61] This was the same Kuomintang China that had made short work of Trotsky's hopes for revolution in 1926–27, now regarded as a major support for anti-fascist forces in Asia. If Kuomintang China was worthy of this admittedly indirect support against fascist Japan, how much more should the United States have deserved support against Nazi Germany? But these nuances and ambiguities did not become part of the theoretical baggage of Trotskyism after the death of the Old Man. American and, despite some lapses, French Trotskyists adopted a position of Leninist "revolutionary Defeatism"—the American Trotskyists even railing against Lend-Lease—while the groups of Pivert and Lovestone found their way back to social democracy and a reconciliation with the reality of war. Trotsky has seen the course of the conflicts of the period earlier than they, but he could not translate his difficult and ambiguous ideas into the language of Leninism. Finally, there remained in Trotskyism little but a Leninism such as was preached by Zinoviev. Trotsky had originally represented an extreme and regionally peculiar wing of the broad tradition of liberal and labourist social reform which rallied before 1914 around the European Social Democracy, and which found itself caught between a fading Western syndicalism and Jacobinism and the rise of the East European revolution. Western-minded Marxists led the collection of

[60] "Discussions with Trotsky"—stenographic draft (12 June 1940), in *Writings 1939–1940*, p. 56.

[61] Letter to Australian Trotskyists, 23 Dec. 1937, in *Fourth International* (July 1942), p. 219.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

anti-parliamentarians, ex-syndicalists and ultra-leftists that made up the early communist movement. Its focus was still on Western Europe, but it could not find the means to speak to the needs of a Western labour movement facing problems other than revolution. This was Trotsky's failure as well. Would the task have been rendered easier had he been more of a Trotskyist?

Minerva

A REVIEW OF SCIENCE, LEARNING & POLICY

Editor: Edward Shils

VOLUME XVI NUMBER 3 AUTUMN 1978

ARTICLES

The Expansion of British Universities and Their Struggle to Maintain Autonomy: 1943–46 *Geoffrey L. Price*

Michael Polanyi's Contributions to the Cause of Freedom in Science *John R. Baker*

Towards Diversity and Adaptability: An Australian View of Governmentally Supported Science *John R. Philip*

REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

A Life-time in Soviet Science Reconsidered: The Adventure of Cybernetics in the Soviet Union *Arnost Kolman*

The Study of Political Science in the Universities of Bangladesh *W. H. Morris-Jones*

BOOK REVIEWS

Reviews by *Robert E. Kohler, George Weisz*

Annual Subscription: £8.00/$18.00. Single Copy £2.50/$5.00

MINERVA, 59 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lenin, Trotsky and Parvus

David S. Anin

THE initial phase of the Bolshevik Revolution was made not by the "Big Two"—Lenin and Trotsky—as we were given to believe, but by the "Big Three," the third being Alexander Helphand (known as Parvus). This is the conclusion reached independently by two authors—namely Alexander Solzhenitsyn, in his *Lenin in Zurich*,[1] and Joel Carmichael, in his biography of Trotsky and in his remarkable appendix devoted to Parvus.[2]

The victorious October coup was made possible, they say, by the persistence of Lenin, who managed to gain the support of his para-military Bolshevik Party in a very short time. The success of the coup and its consolidation was assured by German money supplied to the Bolsheviks, procured by Parvus. Finally, it was Trotsky, leader of the Petrograd Soviet and its Revolutionary Committee (*Revcom*) in whose name the October coup was accomplished, who provided the legitimacy, the thrust and the theoretical justification for the whole enterprise.

No one would argue about the roles attributed to the first and the third of this "*troika.*" When he arrived in Russia in April 1917, Lenin was not at the beginning supported by the militants of his party. The general opinion was that the "old man" had lost touch with reality, both in Russia and elsewhere. Kamenev was inclined, conditionally to be sure, to support the Provisional Government; even the reunification of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks loomed as a possibility. For Stalin, the April Theses were only "a scheme without substance." Apart from an ultra-left group led by the obscure Bagdatiev, it was only the little-known, grey Molotov and the extravagant Madame Kollontai who supported Lenin.

Yet very soon tenacity and leadership brought an apparently lost cause to triumph. Not a popular tribune, a man lacking in personal physical courage, a typical schismatic dissenter (a "Raskolnik," Solzhenitsyn says), Lenin, once he regrouped his militants, soon became, in the unstable conditions of 1917, the unchallengeable leader of his party and a serious contender for power over the nation as well.

AGAIN, no one will deny that the immediate preparation, perpetration and consolidation of the October coup itself, was basically the work of Trotsky; of course, he implemented it together with Lenin's party cadres but with little assistance from Lenin himself. While Lenin—the leader of the party—was in hiding, Trotsky—the leader of the populace—could carry the day. Trotsky was by no means only a performer of Lenin's will. On the eve of the insurrection, the conspirators faced, in fact, two possible ways of action. Lenin angrily and relentlessly pleaded for an immediate seizure of power by the Bolshevik Party, for a *fait accompli*, i.e. for a seizure of power *before* the Congress of Soviets,

[1] A. Solzhenitsyn, *Lenin v Zurikhe* (Paris, 1975). English edition, *Lenin in Zurich* (London, 1976). Reviewed in *Survey* No. 97 (Autumn 1975) pp. 188–94.

[2] Joel Carmichael, *Trotsky* (London, 1975); *Midstream*, December 1975.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which was supposed to legitimize the coup, could assemble. Lenin probably wondered whether he could trust his new allies, the Left SRs whom he always suspected of having some anarchistic inclinations. He also feared that Kerensky, whose strength he obviously overrated, might, with the help of reliable troops, disperse both the Bolsheviks and the pro-Bolshevik Congress of Soviets. He probably also suspected Trotsky and his followers of some kind of opportunism . . . "Who knows? They were, after all, former Mensheviks . . ."

Fulminating against "bourgeois legality" and "constitutional illusions" and ignoring the Central Committee, where appeasers of all sorts were represented, Lenin made direct contacts with the people he believed might be most instrumental in the implementation of the projected coup. Smilga—the most influential Bolshevik in the Baltic fleet—was one; Podvoisky, Nevsky, Antonov-Ovseenko—all leaders of the Bolshevik military organization—were others.

Looking back, Trotsky seems to have judged more correctly than Lenin both the weaknesses of Kerensky and his own strength. In spite of Kerensky's optimistic assurances, Trotsky, having won over or neutralized the Petrograd garrison, believed that, under the circumstances, he might press for a "legitimate" solution, i.e. for an approval of the *putsch* by the Congress of Soviets. Whether Trotsky was as lucid and sure of himself as he describes in his writings, or whether this lucidity and assurance came only *après coup* is, of course, subject to discussion.

The student of those fateful days and hours will always be baffled by a strange, unwarranted optimism coming from people who, because of their position, should apparently have known better. A few examples could easily be multiplied: almost on the eve of the Bolshevik uprising, Kerensky assured the Kadet Nabokov that he would welcome such an uprising. This, he said, would give him an opportunity to strangle the Bolsheviks. Sukhanov, otherwise a keen, although an "impressionistic" observer, believed that an armed regiment of 500 people might have liquidated the whole Bolshevik enterprise. If this had been the case, how was Trotsky able to press so stubbornly for "legality" and "legitimacy?" Obviously Sukhanov's appreciation was only part of the story.

Official Bolshevik sources speak of tens of thousands of sailors, soldiers and workers who had supposedly participated actively in those fateful days and nights. According to these sources, it was only the Red Guards, the Bolshevik military organization *Voenka*, and the factory committees which disposed alone, on the eve of the uprising, of 20,000 armed people. The Petrograd garrison where Bolshevik influence was strong, numbered 150,000 soldiers. The sailors, among whom Bolshevik influence was predominant, boasted 80,000. In reserve were the Latvian Riflemen . . . All these figures, even if greatly exaggerated, are a far cry from Kerensky's and Sukhanov's estimates.

Another set of questions inevitably comes up. How could one explain the fact—for it was a fact—that the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party ignored Lenin's appeals and threats, and supported (albeit somewhat passively) Trotsky, whom many of them mistrusted? I have in mind both the "Leninist core" in the Central Committee (Sverdlov, Stalin, Bubnov, Dzerzhinsky) and the leaders of the second echelon, those who, in fact, assumed control of the Soviet and of all other positions of

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strength, such as garrison units, the Red Guard, the military organization, the Kronstadt sailors, a number of trade unions and other strongholds. There is no trace of a struggle between veteran Leninists, on the one hand, and the newcomers—Trotsky and his followers—on the other. In other words, were the Bolsheviks already in power (as Trotsky maintains) when the Second Congress of the Soviets assembled? Was there a *fait accompli*? Certainly there was. When the Congress of Soviets started its deliberation, a great part of the capital was already in the hands of the Bolsheviks. Trotsky spoke, even before the Congress cast its vote, as an arrogant winner. Unwilling to discuss any compromise proposal, he sent Martov and his ideas " into the dustbin " of history.

Yet before the Bolsheviks' total victory, they still had several painful hours. These came during the " capture " of the Winter Palace, where a group of besieged intellectuals, the members of the last Provisional Government minus Kerensky, could not be overwhelmed by an enormous, fanaticized, intoxicated crowd. The Provisional Government offered only a " symbolic " resistance. Why were the Antonovs and Podvoiskys so slow and undecided in their attempt to overthrow the most important symbol of the Kerensky regime?

IT was the last of the three, Parvus, who provided funds and political insight. Solzhenitsyn and Carmichael believe that, in the light of the published documents of the German Foreign Ministry, Parvus's role has been neglected. In fact, the views and activities of the man have been largely known, even if not well documented. The approximate amount of the funds sent through Parvus to Lenin was revealed even by the early twenties by the German Social Democratic theoretician, Eduard Bernstein: 40 million gold marks. According to the computation made by Mr Carmichael, this would represent something like 700 million dollars today.

Once the fact and even the amount is recognized, the interest in this " affair " should be shifted elsewhere, namely: was money a factor, or the major factor in the Bolshevik victory? Would the February regime have survived and would the Bolsheviks have collapsed without the German subsidies? Is money generally such an important or even decisive factor in a revolution? Was not the Kerensky regime on the brink of collapse anyway, with or without German monetary interference? Did not the Comintern later lavishly subsidize for decades a number of communist parties (in countries which were supposedly pregnant with " revolutionary situations ") without producing any tangible results?

The argument about the numerous Bolshevik newspapers supposedly published with German money is, after all, not so persuasive. The demoralized soldiers, the violent sailors, the indoctrinated workers, those who really made the revolution, did not need elaborate newspapers. With the exception of the central organs in the big cities, a combination of posters with an appealing propaganda newsletter (a kind of *listki*) would have sufficed. We know from numerous reminiscences of Bolsheviks and non-Bolsheviks, how such " newspapers " were created and disappeared. In addition, all the big parties—the SRs, the Mensheviks, the Kadets—had many newspapers.

If not the funds, what was then Parvus's achievement for the

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bolshevik cause? It seems, that, looking back to those months and days, one cannot but come to the conclusion that there were only two effective ways of dislodging the Bolsheviks. The first was a German victory; only a victorious Germany had the power to liquidate the Bolsheviks and only a victorious Germany would not have tolerated a communist Russia on her borders. Yet, as Carmichael correctly remarked, the Germans anticipated everything but their own defeat.

The second way involved the realization of a socio-political package which was " in the air " in a number of parties and amongst individual politicians but which nobody was able to translate into action. Of course, Martov, Chernov and, to some extent, even General Verkhovsky, and the Kadets Baron von Nolde and Nabokov did what they could in order to popularize their proposals in the direction of obtaining peace, an agrarian reform and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. Yet even they avoided saying that, under the circumstances, peace meant a *separate* peace with Germany and that the agrarian reform and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly should be proceeded with immediately. All this was in the air. Yet no party or individual was able to dramatize the issues to such an extent as to force a solution.

A German victory? But this was precisely Parvus's orientation. However, for the Russian patriots, including the moderate socialists, Germany was the " historical enemy." For Parvus, on the contrary, it was Germany that was the stronghold of social democracy. In historical retrospect—and it is from this angle that we should discuss events that took place almost 60 years ago—do Parvus's activities deserve such opprobrium? Would not a German victory have spared Russia from Bolshevism, and Germany and the world from Nazism? Granted, Parvus had a despicable appearance and a thirst for women and money. Yet one does not judge a politician of Parvus's calibre by his eyes (which were like " crayfish " says Solzhenitsyn) or by the length of his legs.

His personality, it is said, was devious and fateful. But were Lenin and Parvus the first and only defeatists in Russian history? Good Russian patriots welcomed the Russian defeat in the Crimean war in the hope that this defeat would contribute to the liberalization of the despotism of the Russia of Nicholas I. Honourable Russian politicians too, had undisclosed, somewhat shady dealings with the enemy during the Russo-Japanese war.

Fateful? But so also was the brave, honest but politically inept General Kornilov. Indeed, the fortunes of the Bolsheviks were ebbing in July-August 1917, to a great extent because of the disclosure of Lenin's receipt of the German money. It was Kornilov's badly prepared, untimely involvement that precipitated the Bolsheviks' return to the stage. With Lenin and Zinoviev in hiding, Trotsky, Kamenev, Lunacharsky, Raskolnikov and others in jail, the Bolsheviks remained, after the July days in Petrograd, without any prominent leader. What is called the " mass Bolshevization " of the Soviets and the garrisons was accelerated and achieved during and after the Kornilov affair. Fateful and disastrous too, was Miliukov's stubborn attachment to the " secret treaties," the " hysterical passivity " of Kerensky, and Chernov's inability to lead a

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

socialist and democratic government, as well as to bring order to his own million-member party.

In such a complex epic as the Russian Revolution, it is impossible to tell what contributed most to the Bolshevik victory. Was it the war which could not be won anyway and which was, in fact, incompatible with the revolution? Was it the inability to implement reforms or was it the total misunderstanding of the Bolshevik tactics and intentions displayed by the non-Bolsheviks?

INDEED, the non-Bolsheviks did not heed what warnings they were given. The coup itself was accomplished almost without resistance. The endless deliberations in *Vikzhel* or in the Petrograd city *Duma*, where the Bolsheviks deliberately sent moderate representatives (Kamenev, Riazanov, Rykov), deceived the non-Bolsheviks. Even the attitude of the "strike breakers" Zinoviev and Kamenev contributed to Lenin's victory. The general opinion was that the Bolsheviks were divided and that, as a result, they might not risk a trial of strength. In fact the intellectuals—Riazanov and Kamenev—had little influence on the Bolshevik leadership.

The real "classical" counter-revolution was slow in coming. The *Junker* uprising misfired. The Cossacks, led by Krasnov, did not want to fight for Kerensky, who only a couple of months previously had defeated Kornilov and his generals. Thus the Bolsheviks got an unexpected breathing-space. The big anti-Bolshevik units—the White armies—were formed much later. Before that the Bolsheviks got from the imperialists and interventionists the biggest present: the collapse of the German army. Hence, it was probably not so much the German subsidies which helped Lenin to consolidate his power, but rather the military collapse of his benefactor. The greatest service which Parvus rendered to Lenin was not, I would assume, the German money but rather the help that Germany extended to Lenin in allowing him to reach Russia in the sealed train. Without the German funds the Bolsheviks would have probably survived anyway. Without Lenin they would have hardly been able and willing to "change the world."

IT so happened that the man who was able to save the Bolsheviks from most of their "imbroglios," had also had with them in the past the fiercest theoretical, political and personal squabbles. There is, therefore, no reason to quarrel with his biographer when he reminds us that at all the turns of Bolshevik history, Trotsky was a victim of political and theoretical plagiarism: the October coup, the civil war, the NEP (earlier proposed by Trotsky), industrialization (again first put forward by Trotsky and his followers). Even the name of the Bolshevik paper *Pravda* was appropriated by Lenin. Indeed, it was Trotsky who had first published a paper under this title during his Viennese exile.

Yet on one major point, Mr Carmichael errs. The much publicized Parvus-Trotsky theory of the "permanent revolution," was in 1917 not "quickly taken over" by Lenin. In other words, Lenin, who had already been accused (and rightly) of stealing Chernov's baby—the agrarian programme of the Socialist Revolutionaries (he himself acknowledged the fact)—did not steal the celebrated product of the Trotsky-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Parvus tandem. This is an important point, for this theory was later to become a major anti-Trotsky weapon.

It is, to be sure, hard to establish (especially in the realm of ideas of this sort) who and what was stolen from whom. Lenin made, in 1905 and later, statements which were—at least on the face of it—similar to those expressed by the authors of the "permanent revolution" theory.

The starting point, in this respect, of both—Trotsky and Lenin—was the alleged weakness of the Russian bourgeoisie which, having appeared too late on the political scene, was allegedly unable to accomplish its own bourgeois political revolution. Due to this weakness of the Russian bourgeoisie, the Russian working class was supposed to carry out a "double historical mission"—namely, to lead the struggle for the attainment of both the bourgeois-political and the socialist revolution. In Marxist terms, it was called the "hegemony of the proletariat in a bourgeois revolution." What complicated this already abstruse "permanent revolution" theory (barely understood by most of the Party militants) was that, according to this theory, both revolutions were supposed to be carried out almost simultaneously. Moreover, the revolution was supposed to spread to the advanced Western countries. Started as a bourgeois revolution in backward Russia, it was to be taken over or led by the Russian proletariat which, in turn, was to be supported by the allegedly revolutionary Western working class.

Did Lenin really believe this? Or had he "taken over" the Parvus-Trotsky theory? In fact, Lenin used a different terminology and made different stresses; it was precisely in Marxist circles that the latter were of utmost importance. Indeed, Lenin believed that the proponents of the "permanent revolution" were underestimating the revolutionary potential of the Russian peasantry. In a predominantly agrarian country, this was a major sin. The Trotsky-Parvus theory had also another vulnerable point: it made the strategists of the Russian Revolution too dependent on revolutions in the advanced Western countries.

In view of what had happened, could Trotsky and his sympathizers claim that "history" had been unfolded according to the permanent revolution scheme? Hardly. Indeed, the revolutions—both the February and October ones—pushed to the forefront not so much the Russian proletariat—the supposed "vanguard"—but, rather, the soldiers and sailors, i.e. the much neglected (by Trotsky and Parvus) peasants in uniform. Finally, the hopes pinned on the Western proletariat—a major element of the permanent revolution theory—did not materialize. The revolution stopped at the Polish border.

Lenin obviously simplified the scheme. His term was not "permanent" but (a process of) "growing over" (*pererastanie*). This meant that, provided appropriate domestic and international conditions were fulfilled, a revolution which started in backward Russia as a political and bourgeois revolution, might "grow over" or be transformed into a socialist revolution. Always inclined to adjust theory to practice, Lenin translated his theory in 1917 into a set of popular slogans: immediate peace, immediate distribution of land, requisition of bread. For the army of 10 million in disintegration and in expectation of an agrarian reform, this was something that the soldiers and sailors wanted to hear and to

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have. This could also be interpreted as a bourgeois revolution in the process of transformation into a socialist revolution.

Of course, Lenin did not revive the dispute with Trotsky about the "permanent revolution" during and after October, though in the years preceding the revolution he castigated this theory very sharply. In 1917 and after, Lenin was not interested in rekindling his past disagreements with Trotsky but wanted, rather, to minimize them. In these years Lenin highly valued Trotsky's talents and his physical courage. "Name me somebody else who would be able in such a short time to set up an army such as ours," Lenin once said to Gorky. While paying lip service to the revolutionary potentialities of the "Western proletariat," Lenin was, in fact, from the start, mainly occupied with the consolidation of the already victorious Bolshevik revolution.

THE decline, fall and agony of Trotsky is largely known. The man, it is said, possessed a strange combination of qualities and shortcomings which both attracted and alienated. On the negative side, he was Jewish, a newcomer in the Party, arrogant, distant, *cassant*, prompt to make enemies or ill-wishers. His brilliance, talents, physical courage were recognized by both his friends and his enemies. Among the latter, as usual, his gifts bred envy and jealousy.

Was Trotsky "a Bolshevik by temperament and a Menshevik by necessity," as Mr Carmichael asserts? He was probably neither one nor the other. What did Trotsky feel and mean when, acceding to the chairmanship of the Petrograd Soviet, he solemnly declared that free speech was and would be guaranteed to all factions in the "workers' parliament"? Was this meant sincerely, or was it one of those Bolshevik ruses, designed to relax the vigilance of the non-Bolsheviks? From his Menshevik past he should have known that Bolshevism and political freedom are hardly compatible, and that Lenin's organizational scheme was leading irrevocably towards a personal dictatorship.

Trotsky was not, so it seems, a Bolshevik by character and temperament. His nature was of another breed. He did not feel at ease in the underground circles as Bolsheviks usually did. In 1905 and in 1917 he had excelled, not when he was in the underground but in the open. In fact, he was subdued and defeated already after the Civil War when the heroic and romantic period came to an end. Of course, he was still for some years a member of the Politburo; he tried out a number of temporary assignments; he travelled, underwent medical treatment, but his active career in Russia was ended. It seems that Lenin who, himself, already felt like a driver who had lost control of his motorcar, and who looked for a counterpart against Stalin, did not know where to place Trotsky. He offered him the position of one of his deputies, a position which he would have shared with the grey Tsuriupa or the rather average Rykov. The Comintern was already bureaucratized and domesticated; the Party was already in Stalin's hands. The government? With Lenin's absence it became more and more a subordinated agency of the party.

Was there still a possibility of redressing the situation in the party? Lenin tried to do this when he wrote his "Testament" in which he demanded the removal of Stalin. Lenin made another attempt by offering Trotsky a bloc—an alliance, and warning him against the conclusion of

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a " rotten compromise " with Stalin. It is noteworthy that in the " Testament " Lenin totally missed the real nature of Stalinism and castigated only Stalin's personal deficiencies. For reasons which it is hard to establish (perhaps because of apathy or depression) Trotsky did the contrary of what Lenin asked him to do. He embarked on a way which was not usually his. He precisely concluded a " rotten compromise " with Stalin. He did not use the " Testament " against Stalin. He rudely disavowed Max Eastman when the latter disclosed the contents of the " Testament " abroad. He started to operate with slogans whose falsity was repellent. " The Party is always right." It was Stalin who mockingly reminded him that " The Party has sometimes been wrong."

Even less was Trotsky a Menshevik although he loved Martov and respected Axelrod (who did not?). The Mensheviks were, for him, too " dogmatic," too pedestrian, too " *petit bourgeois.*" Essentially an " elitist," he had, like Lenin, only scorn for Menshevik " spontaneous activity " (*samodeyatelnost*) and " trade unionism." Impatient, bent on radicalism, he had difficulties in observing Party discipline. He proved it especially in 1905 when, carried away by the events, he radicalized the " bourgeois " revolution to the extreme. To be sure, he was for some years close to the Mensheviks and sometimes even represented them at international socialist gatherings. In fact, however, he just represented himself.

In spite of his quarrels with the Bolsheviks, Trotsky always cherished the idea of the reunification of all currents and factions of Russian Social Democracy. Because of his role in the 1905 revolution he believed that he was the most suitable figure for the implementation of this task. Hence, Trotsky and Trotskyism could, only by stretching the terms, be identified with Bolshevism or Menshevism.

Another problem comes to the reader's mind. Why did Trotsky during the Bolshevik period suffer, seemingly, more than other revolutionary leaders, from his Jewishness? While he never denied his Jewish origin (how could he?), Trotsky obviously tried to " hush it up." To be sure, the " Jewish complex " was not alien to other assimilated Jews from middle-class families. Yet the Menshevik leaders Martov, Axelrod and Dan, or the Socialist Revolutionaries—the Gotzs, the Fundaminskys, the Gavronskys, Minors, Natansons, the three former heirs of the nationally known millionaire Vysotsky, were, so it seems, free from such complexes.

Lenin, credited with being immune to anti-Jewish feelings, nevertheless largely exploited the fact that the most influential socialist leaders of the Soviets during the February period, were Jews. The " Gotz-Liber-Dan " argument appears too frequently in Lenin's writings and speeches during those months. Shrewd and experienced, Lenin could hardly miss the implications and the possible consequences of such a polemical device. He certainly knew that a certain anti-semitism was still rampant among both Bolshevik Party cadres and the broad Bolshevik following. " The Trotskys make the revolutions and the Bronsteins pay the bill," the Muscovite Rabbi once said. Trotsky, too, certainly did feel that, notwithstanding the triumphant revolution and all Marxist precepts, the " Jewish problem " has, as it was proven subsequently, been solved only on paper. Indeed, five years after the October Revo-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lution, Trotsky's Jewishness would already emerge as one of the major factors contributing to his defeat. A decade or two later, the Rabbi's dictum would acquire a much more sinister meaning. At that time accounts would be settled with both the Trotskys and the Bronsteins.

TROTSKY in exile was still full of energy and vitality. Trotsky, the littérateur, analyst, polemicist and historian will certainly not be forgotten. On the contrary, Trotsky, the politician, during these years, comes out, even through the pages of a sympathetic biographer, as one who had lost touch with reality. At times, he compared himself to Lenin ("One against the world") alluding to Lenin's defeatist position during the war years. When he created, against the advice of his European followers, the Fourth International, he said that "the work I am engaged in now is the most important work in my life." Yet very soon he was to put himself in an inextricable position. Indeed, modelling France on Germany (Marxists are always fond of analogies), he attacked both the communists and the socialists when, facing the Nazi menace, they created the "popular fronts." Under-estimating the strength of the Stalin apparatus, he still believed that Stalin could be overthrown because of his failures in Germany. He never suspected Stalin of organizing the murder of Kirov. His reactions and analogies were, sometimes, out of reasonable proportion. Thus, he compared the show trials and the Yezhov terror to the trials of Beilis and Dreyfus or to . . . Kerensky and Rasputin (?). Feeling that his entourage was infiltrated by some *agents provocateurs*, he suspected, without any evidence, his son Liova Sedov, his most devoted follower. On the contrary, the real *provocateur*—Zborovsky—was beyond suspicion.

Thus, the man who, in spite of all his deficiencies, was one of the foremost political strategists of our century, displayed poor judgment about people with whom he dealt directly and frequently. Being both credulous and irreconcilable, he was easily deceived.

Trotsky liked to call himself "Bolshevik-Leninist." Here, he certainly displayed a false and contrived modesty. Indeed, he was much more than a disciple. Apparently, he believed that only as a "Bolshevik-Leninist" might he, in case of a crisis in Stalinist Russia, regain his lost power. There is no doubt that he and some of his followers still entertained such hopes. The Clemenceau analogy, the repetitious statements in defence of Russia—even if a deformed, degenerated and bureaucratized one—indicate that he did not exclude a comeback.

Trotsky was probably the sharpest and, in a way, one of the most informative interpreters of Soviet affairs in the twenties and thirties. During these years, he came to the conclusion that the revolution had been "betrayed" and "deformed" by Stalin's bureaucracy. Let us note that, with the help of a somewhat different terminology, this interpretation was at that time adopted by most of the Western specialists on Soviet affairs. It is significant that the former Menshevik seemed somehow to awake in Trotsky, when he came to list the reasons for the triumph of the Stalinist dictatorship. Indeed as a "revolutionary Marxist" he had to attribute the main reason for the revolution's "degeneration" to Russia's economic and cultural backwardness, i.e. to its unreadiness for socialism—in fact, a very Menshevik argument or dogma.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letter to the Editor

Sir,

John B. Dunlop's book. *The New Russian Revolutionaries* (Nordland Publishing Company, Mass. 1976), is a serious and thorough account of the history of VSKhSON from its inception to its collapse.*

As I read the book, however, I realized that my evaluation of the military significance of VSKhSON, of its actual activity in this direction, differed from that of the author. Was VSKhSON really a military organization, aiming to overthrow the government by armed struggle, with plans to organize an underground army and collect weapons in order to achieve this aim, as John Dunlop tends to believe, or was this organization, although political, not in fact military, its activity being limited to the dissemination of information, and the adoption of conspiratorial methods in order to do so? Conspiracy was an essential factor as the reading of forbidden literature carries various degrees of punishment in the USSR, including imprisonment. Another question lies behind this first question. Did the court have any basis, in terms of Soviet law, for giving Ogurtsov and his friends such severe sentences? More and more people are joining in the campaign for the release of Igor Ogurtsov, and it is his fate which gives our difference of opinion such an important practical significance.

Professor Dunlop has drawn on all the available sources of information; copies of the sentence and indictment in the trial of the second VSKhSON group, the case in which I was involved; reminiscences, including previously unpublished material, by V. Osipov, Yuri Gendler, Bernard Karavatsky, an anonymous article published in the January, 1971 issue of Possev; the "reminiscences" of A. Petro-Agatov and, finally, my replies to questions he sent me when I first arrived in Canada.

There are only two possible sources which could have served as the basis for Professor Dunlop's chapter on preparations for an armed struggle. The first is Karavatsky's memoirs, but Karavatsky was never a member of VSKhSON and therefore, bearing in mind the secrecy observed within VSKhSON, cannot be considered reliable. Nor are his memoirs in any way precise. Not once does he refer to any of the VSKhSON members for confirmation of his account that "our organization" was planning an armed struggle, Karavatsky's account reads as though he is not providing information, but merely sharing his own personal opinions.

The second source of information used by Professor Dunlop, strange as it may seem, is the bill of indictment and the summing up by the prosecution, drawn up by the KGB. I find this strange, because both

* Professor Luryi's article on the All-Russian Social-Christian Union for the Liberation of the People (VSKhSON) appeared in the last issue of *Survey* (No. 105).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the West and in the USSR, the legal document which establishes the degree of guilt is not the indictment written by the police, but the sentence or verdict of the court. Professor Dunlop bases all his conclusions concerning plans to overthrow the government (!) in Leningrad in November 1967 on the fictions contained in the indictment, despite the fact that the accused did not confirm these inventions in court, nor did the court consider them to have been substantiated. The concrete examples of military activity presented in the book, based on the indictment, are as follows. In the spring of 1966, one of the accused offered to another accused the use of his private garage for storing weapons and his car for transporting these weapons. Another accused offered to prepare secret arms caches near Petershof. They were arrested only ten months later. But where are the weapons and where are these secret caches? Then, in December 1966, one of the accused suggested to two others that they should "study the layout and the security system" of the building of the Leningrad Council Executive Committee. To believe these fantasies, one would have to have a very low opinion of the mental capacities of the leaders and members of VSKhSON. An organization dedicated to overthrowing the government in the USA would have the same chance of success if they studied the layout and security system of the Town Hall in Chicago, say.

Professor Dunlop explains his use of the indictment, saying

> The impression these documents give that VSKhSON was poised to move out of the planning stage finds implicit confirmation in certain of the non-regime sources, such as S. and Petrov-Agatov.

But in neither of these two sources is there any corroboration whatsoever of VSKhSON's military activity. Petrov-Agatov, whose role in the Ginzburg case throws considerable doubt on his reliability, said that he learned of the existence of VSKhSON only after the arrest of its members.

Professor Dunlop does not agree with my explanation of the motives which prompted the Leningrad KGB officials to inflate the imaginary significance of the military activity of VSKhSON and he considers that the trial of the second group demonstrates the KGB's desire to underplay this activity rather than to exaggerate it. Referring to my letter of 24 January 1975, he mentions that I do not deny the possibility that Bochevarov may have concealed the military significance of the organization from me. Professor Dunlop's question was: "Maybe Bochevarov did not tell you the whole truth?" My answer: "I am prepared to admit that Bochevarov may not have told me the whole truth, *if he intended to conceal something from the KGB and the court* [these words were not underlined in my letter—Yu. L.]. But it seems to me that the point is not in his evidence, but in that we found no objective indications of military intentions."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Moreover, we now have positive proof that VSKhSON was never planning a *coup d'état*, was not involved in any military activity and was concerned only with the dissemination of information! I have deliberately left quotations from Vagin and Ogurtsov to the end to show that even without these primary sources there is no serious basis whatsoever for describing VSKhSON as a dangerous military organization.

> **Vagin :** The charge was patently absurd, as the organization did not have the strength needed to achieve a *coup d'état* nor the contacts in government and military circles. In practice, its activity was limited to reproducing and distributing literature with a philosophical and religious content. (*Russkaya Mysl'*, No. 3169)
>
> **Ogurtsov :** Surely you cannot think that the judges were so illiterate as to be unable to distinguish between a plot to seize power and an illegal group, with the remote goal of launching a social-Christian movement? As our activities never got further than words, our words have been recognized as representing a dreadful truth, as idle words do not carry such punishment." (*Russkaya Mysl'*, No. 3164)

It seems to me that it is very important to dispel the myths surrounding the nature of VSKhSON. People and organizations who are opposed to violence need have no qualms in associating themselves with the campaign for Ogurtsov's release.

Yours faithfully,
Yuri Luryi
University of Manitoba

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Max Hayward 1924—1979

I CAN scarcely do more this afternoon *—as we gather to mourn a beloved friend and colleague—than hint at the magnitude of the debt that the student of modern Russian culture owes to Max Hayward. For some 25 years he laboured tirelessly and selflessly to bring to the West the good tidings about the resurgence of the free Russian imagination. As translator of Pasternak, Solzhenitsyn and Nadezhda Mandelsham, as an anthologist of five decades of Soviet literary non-conformism, he did more than anyone I could name to make the "dissonant voices in Soviet literature" resound in clear and graceful English. Ever since the early signs of the creative ferment in post-Stalin Russia he monitored the Soviet cultural scene with unfailing care and quiet, unobtrusive authority. With his characteristic generosity he devoted his remarkable literary and editorial skills to the arduous job of rescuing, and making available to the English speaking audience, eye-witness testimony bearing on the ordeal and survival of the latter-day Russian intelligentsia

Grateful as we were for this remarkable feat of cultural mediation, we were increasingly eager to hear, at length, Max Hayward's own voice. The very lucidity and sagacity of his editorial commentary strongly suggested to some of us that this ever-reliable chronicler of Russian literary dissent, this astute interpreter of the twists and turns in Soviet cultural policy was also a literary critic of the first order. This belief was fully borne out by some of Max's recent writings, such as his introduction to the bilingual edition of Anna Akhmatova and, most notably, his review of Andrei Sinyavsky's forays into Pushkin and Gogol. Max's assessment of these provocative and controversial studies was a singularly effective blend of fair-mindedness with keen receptivity to iconoclasm and an exquisite sense of literary values. It was a masterly performance which made one wish for more, and larger-scale, literary essays from Max's pen

Yet for those lucky enough to know Max Hayward personally, what he has done and was about to do—admirable and indispensable as that was—could not be any more precious and compelling than what he was.

I shall always treasure our first meeting, a long, leisurely conversation which lasted well into the night, in Max's ascetic cell at St. Antony's College. Max was recounting his early experiences in the Soviet Union. I was spellbound by the vividness of his narrative which brought to life a unique gallery of Soviet types, including some colourful "down-and-outers." Above all, I marvelled at his unerring sense of Russian culture and society, a sense epitomized by his stunning command of

* A eulogy delivered at the memorial service for Max Hayward, held at St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, New York, on 17 April 1979.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Russian, at the range of his intellectual curiosity and cultural empathy, at the richness of his humanity.

Nearly 20 years later we spent together a full afternoon in the heart of New York, comparing notes, after a long interval, on the recent developments in Russian émigré literature and politics. What a pleasure it was to have one's hunches confirmed, one's lingering doubts resolved! What a joy it was to commune once again with that generosity of spirit, that unfailing rightness of tone and judgment, with the firm sense of commitment totally immune to fanaticism, the low-key wisdom that was Max! Little did I know then that this was to be our last meeting. . . .

I shall miss him more than I can say. As I stand here, contemplating helplessly the brutal loss we have sustained, my inward refusal to come to terms with so senseless, so wanton a death, is overlaid, if not mitigated, by the abiding sense of gratitude for the privilege of having known Max Hayward.

Victor Erlich

MAX HAYWARD was a lifelong friend and collaborator. Together we organized the Oxford Conference on Soviet Literature in 1962 and co-edited the two books: *Literature and Revolution in Soviet Russia 1917–62* (Oxford University Press, 1963) and *On Trial: The Case of Sinyavsky and Daniel* (Collins and Harvill Press, 1967). His articles in *Survey* include the following:

"Pilnyak and Zamyatin"	No. 36 (April–June 1961)
"Conflict and Change in Literature"	No. 46 (January 1963)
"The Literary Purge in Retrospect"	No. 49 (October 1963)
"Journey to Siberia"	No. 74/75 (Winter–Spring 1970)
"The Decline of Socialist Realism"	No. 82 (Winter 1972)

L. L.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Contributors

JONATHAN R. ADELMAN is Assistant Professor in the Graduate School of International Studies at the University of Denver. His research interests are in the areas of comparative communism and Soviet politics. His articles have appeared in *Studies in Comparative Communism*, *Armed Forces and Society* and *Military Affairs*.

DAVID S. ANIN is the author of *The Revolution of 1917 Viewed by its Leaders* (1973). He has edited McGraw-Hill's *Encyclopaedia of Russia and the Soviet Union* and has contributed articles on Russia to numerous journals.

ALAIN BESANÇON is Director of Studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Paris, where he lectures on Russian culture and history. His recent works include *Court traité de soviétologie* (1976), *Les Origines intellectuelles du léninisme* (1978) and *La Confusion des langues* (1978).

ANTHONY D'AGOSTINO is Associate Professor of History at San Francisco State University, and the author of *Marxism and the Russian Anarchists* (1977).

PETER DELI is a Lecturer in History at the University of Hong Kong. He has been working on the problems of International Communism, in Paris and at St. Antony's College, Oxford and is now completing a book on the French Left. He has already contributed to *Survey*.

WALTER KENDALL, formerly Senior Research Fellow at Nuffield College, Oxford, has written *The Revolutionary Movement in Britain, 1900–1921* (1969), *State Ownership, Workers Control and Socialism* (1974) and *The Labour Movement in Europe* (1975).

PETER KING is Senior Lecturer in Government at the University of Sydney. His publications include *Australia and Nuclear Weapons* (1966) and *The Strategy of Total Withholding* (1971). He lectures on Soviet politics and strategic studies and is presently completing a critique of superpower nuclear strategic doctrine. In 1976 he was visiting fellow at the Department of International Law at the University of Moscow.

ANTONIN LIEHM was one of the intellectual leaders of the 1968 Czechoslovak reform movement and an editor of *Literarni Listy*. He is now Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Pennsylvania.

ROBERT H. MCNEAL is a specialist in Russian history, now at the University of Massachusetts. His works include a brief history of the CPSU. *The Bolshevik Tradition* and a life of Nadezhda Krupskaya. He is general editor of *Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU*.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PETER R. MOODY is a member of the Department of Government and International Studies at the University of Notre Dame. His most recent long work is *Opposition and Dissent in Contemporary China* (1977).

SUSAN L. SHIRK is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of California, San Diego. In 1978–79 she was a Peace Fellow in the National Fellows Program at the Hoover Institution. She has written articles on Chinese education and politics, and is currently researching equality and inequality in China.

GEORGE R. URBAN is a writer on contemporary history, resident in England. He is Academic Consultant to Radio Free Europe, and the editor and co-author of *Can We Survive Our Future?* (1972), *Toynbee on Toynbee* (1974), *Détente* (1976), *Hazards of Learning* (1977) and *Eurocommunism* (1978).

BERTRAM D. WOLFE (1896–1977) was Senior Research Fellow in Russian History at the Hoover Institution. Among the books he wrote are *Diego Riviera: His Life and Times* (1939), *Three Who Made a Revolution* (1948), *Marxism: One Hundred Years in the Life of a Doctrine* (1965), *The Bridge and the Abyss: The Troubled Friendship of Maxim Gorky and V. I. Lenin* (1967) and *An Ideology in Power* (1969). Lewis S. Feuer's memoir may be read in *Survey* No. 102.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RIVISTA INTERNAZIONALE DI SCIENZE ECONOMICHE E COMMERCIALI

(*International Review of Economics and Business*)

VOL. XXVI MAY 1979 NO. 5

The Optimal Development of Agricultural and Industrial Outputs under Financial Self-sufficiency GIOVANNI DEMARIA

Man and Automation: Instinct of Workmanship, Nightmare of Vanishing Routine and Agony of Forced Creativity OLEG ZINAM

The Effect of Diversification on Industry Performance. Some Evidence from the U.K. Manufacturing Industry J. HASSID

Risk and Return in the Canadian Mineral Resource Industry ALAN M. RUGMAN

Capitalism and Imperialism. A Negative Paternity Test ARNALDO MAURI

Industrial Subcontracting and Employment Stability in Hong Kong RONALD HSIA and AMY TSUJI

On the Political Authority Consolidation and the Modernization of Economy in China PAOLO LUTTERI

The Birth of Modern World in Eastern Asia CLAUDIO ZANIER

Book reviews

Articles published in English, Italian and French. Summaries in English and Italian. INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS is a monthly, published since 1954 under the auspices of Bocconi University, Milan. Editorial and administrative offices: Via Teuliè 1, 20136 Milano (Italy). Annual subscription: Italian Liras: 36,000. Back issues available.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If you are interested in the study of politics and government you are invited to join

THE SOUTHERN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

membership includes

THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS

The JOURNAL OF POLITICS is a quarterly devoted to enriching and advancing the knowledge of politics. Inside its pages all methods, positions, conceptualizations, and techniques are expounded by authors who know their subjects and who back their ideas with careful research and positive scholasticism. There is no bias in THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS—toward theory, American politics, or anything else. It is an open journal. Missing it is missing an adventure into the character of political variety.

— — — — — — — — — — — — —

Upon receipt of this form you will begin a one-year's membership in The Southern Political Science Association, including a subscription to THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS.

.....Individual	$12.00
.....Student	$ 8.00
.....Institution	$19.00
.....Foreign Postage (additional) . .	$ 2.65

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

ZIP CODE

Please make check or money order payable to THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS. Send to:

THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS
University of Florida
Gainesville FL 32611
U.S.A.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A time and a place
Mikhail Kheifets

Anti-Semitism in the USSR today

Take another ' Jewish ' profession: the law. Who are the lawyers entrusted with important cases, *i.e.* cases brought by the KGB? My wife laughed after my trial, ' You know, Mishka, I tried to find you a Russian lawyer, so as not to create the impression that one hand washes the other. But I couldn't find one.'

In camp they refer to these people as ' pocket lawyers ' because they're in the KGB's pockets: the KGB takes your prosecutor from one pocket and your defence lawyer from the other. These lawyers, the KGB's most important assistants at the trial, are used to carry out the more subtle tasks which are beyond the abilities of their own bull-necks. I'm sorry to say that a lawyer with my own surname played just this role, that of prostitute to the KGB, at the trial of my comrade V. Maramzin, bringing him to ' sincere repentance ' and a ' denunciation of the West '—the prosecutors themselves could never have achieved this. Still, Kheifets was one of the better sort: for the political support he gave the prosecution he was able to gain a reduction of his client's term of imprisonment. The others don't even ask for that. (Mikhail Kheifets, *A Time and a Place*; from an extract published in **Index on Censorship** No. 5/1979.)

Mikhail Kheifets was sentenced in connexion with ' Case 15 ' in Leningrad in 1974. He had written (but not published) an essay ' Joseph Brodsky and Our Generation '. The book *A Time and a Place* was written in the strict regime labour camp in Mordovia to which he was sent for four years; he is now serving two years' exile in Kazakhstan.

Index on Censorship publishes banned manuscripts from all over the world; it also publishes reports on threats to freedom of expression. A subscription costs £8/US$16 (6 issues) from **Oxford University Press** (Journals), Press Road, London NW10 0DD.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Oxford University Press

The Jews in Soviet Russia since 1917

Edited by Lionel Kochan

'An indispensable handbook for those who need to penetrate the official smokescreen and arm themselves with the relevant facts and figures of a continuing national disgrace.' *The Observer.* This third edition, the first in paperback, takes account of recent events affecting Soviet Jews. Third edition £2.95 *Oxford Paperbacks*

Oxford Slavonic Papers

New Series, Volume XI: 1978

Edited by Robert Auty, J. L. I. Fennell, and I. P. Foote

An important study of the application of the title *tsar* to Russian princes before the centralization of the Muscovite state, and an account of the career of the sixteenth-century merchant-diplomat Osip Nepea are among the articles included in this volume. Illustrated £9

Complete Russian Course for Beginners

M. Beresford

This book, formerly published under the title *Complete Russian Course for Scientists*, offers a rapid, intensive course designed to enable beginners to master the essentials of Russian for reading purposes. Although written with the science student in mind, the book can equally well serve the needs of students not concerned with scientific or technical Russian. Paper covers £3.95

Economic Reform in East German Industry

Gert Leptin and Manfred Melzer

Translated by Roger A. Clarke

This book analyses the rise and ultimate fall in 1970 of the East German 'New Economic System', the most comprehensive effort to date to improve rather than replace the traditional soviet-type economy. It contributes to our understanding of the factors behind the short-lived East German 'economic miracle'. £12 *Economic Reforms in East European Industry*

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Oxford University Press

The Life of Aleksandr Blok

Volume I: The Distant Thunder (1880-1908)

Avril Pyman

'He sets the biographer a daunting challenge. Dr Pyman has risen splendidly to the occasion. . . . She tells a complicated story with gusto. . . . Perhaps Dr Pyman's rarest merit is to combine great empathy and sharp if benevolent irony in her approach to Blok and the strange company he kept.' *The Guardian.* Illustrated £12.50

Turgenev: His Life and Times

Leonard Schapiro

'His main aim, successfully realized, has been to set Turgenev's life and art in the context of the social and political controversies of his age. . . . There is not a dull page. . . . His way of viewing Turgenev is admirably suited to his purpose; he likes and respects him, but sees him with clear eyes.' *The Guardian.* Illustrated £12.50

The Oxford Chekhov

Volume VII: Stories 1893-1895

Translated and edited by Ronald Hingley

'Our sense of the relevance of Chekhov to the predicament of later 20th-century man is enhanced by Dr Hingley's masterly translation. . . . His work is that rare achievement, a body of translated literature which renders the very essence of the original accessible to the English reader.' *Birmingham Post.* £10

A Russian Schoolboy

Sergei Aksákov

'Sergei Aksákov was the grandson of a Russian landowner. His autobiographical book in an admirable translation by J. D. Duff seems to me a classic in its own right as well as a rare evocation of period and place.' *Southern Evening Echo.* ' An entrancing chronicle of boyhood in Russia 200 years ago by one of the country's finest writers. As an account of day-to-day life it is an invaluable document.' *Manchester Evening News.* £4.50

Printed in Great Britain by The Eastern Press Ltd., London and Reading

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED